

THE
PIQU'S SOUL'S
Divine Breathings,
Pantings and Thirstings
AFTER
CHRIST,
In Holy and Heart-Searching
MEDITATIONS.

To which are Added,
The Sacred MYSTERIES of
Holy Living and Dying,
With suitable Helps and Directions.
Also, Serious Considerations and Reflections on
Eternity, in its Nature and Duration.
A Divine Discourse of the *Nature and Immu-*
rality of Man's Soul in the Body, and when it
departs from it.
Considerations on the *Joys of Heaven, and the*
Torments of Hell, by way of Meditation.
With MEDITATIONS upon the Seven
Ages of Man's Life

Very useful for Families and Single Persons.

By James Taylor, B.D.

London, Printed for J. Blare, at the Looking-
Glass, on London Bridge, 1702.

P. O. N. O. N. I. S.
 Divine Blessings
 Paintings and Drawings
 A. M. R.

CHRIST

In Holy and Heart-searching

MEDITATIONS



The Sacred

Holy Living and Dying

With suitable Helps and Instructions
 Also, seasons Contemplation and Reflection on
 A Divine Discourse of the Author and Master
 of the Soul's Part in the Body, and which it
 depends from it.
 Considerations on the Joy of Heaven, and the
 Torments of Hell, by way of Exhortation
 With MEDITATIONS upon the Seven
 Ages of Man's Life.

Very useful to: Gentlemen and single Persons.

By James Smith, D.D.
 London. Printed for J. Smith at the Foot of
 St. Dunstons Church Lane. 1702.

THE
PREFACE
TO THE
Christian Reader.

Reader,

IN this small Manual you will find such good Things stored up for promoting your Eternal Welfare, that in your travelling through the Wilderness of this World to the Heavenly Jerusalem, they will be a refreshing to your Soul, enflaming your Heart with such Divine Love and Holy Desires, such Pantings and Breathings after Christ, and the Joys of the Life to come, as will not suffer you to be weary, or faint in your Way, but enable you, through God's Mercies, and the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, so to run the Race with all Chearfulness, that at the End of it you may receive a Crown of Incorruptible Glory. It sets before you Life and Death, and admonishes you to choose the better Part whilst you have precious Time and Opportunity put into your Hands: It affords Milk to Babes, and Meat to strong

The Preface to the Christian Reader.

Men: It directs and guides you in the Ways of Knowledge and Truth, that you may seek and find Grace and Mercy as your Help and Support, and is a sure Comfort and Consolation in the Time of Trouble; being a Posie of choice Flowers culled from the Garden of Wisdom, a Lantern to your Feet, and Light to your Paths to lead you in the Way you ought to go; make you Wise unto Salvation, which that it may do, by your well applying it, and its effectually working on your Heart, is the earnest Desire of,

The well-wisher of your Soul,

JAMES TAYLOR.

T H E

THE
 PIOUS SOUL'S
 Divine Breathings,
 Pantings and Thirstings
 AFTER
 CHRIST.

*An Encouragement to an early Repen-
 tance, and the Exercise of Religious
 Duties.*

WHOLEsome and Sacred
 Helps are like Living-Waters to
 the Soul of Man, refreshing and
 strengthening it, as a Giant refreshed with
 Wine to run its Race in the Paths of Right-
 eousness, at the End of which is placed a
 Crown of Glory, an incorruptible Glory,
 that fades not away, but is ever durable,
 filling the Soul with unspeakable Joys and
 Delights to all Eternity. We see the Mer-
 chant,

The Pious Soul's

chant refusēs no Travail nor dangerous Voyages to gain a perishing Wealth; the Soldier declineth no Danger, for desire either of Glory or Spoil; and all Men in their Vocations labour and strive to their Might for the Things of this World, which all summed in one, are but Vanity, or meer Nothings, comparable to the Eternal Treasures laid up for those that will strive and struggle for them, in being faithful unto Death: Things so necessary, that on gaining them depends an endless Joy and Felicity, or in losing them, a Deprivation of the Amiable and Beatifick Presence of God for ever, in intolerable and endless Pains and Torments.

LET every Soul amongst us then be up and doing, whilst it is to Day, whilst the Water of Life is offered freely, without Price or Money, whilst Christ calls and invites us to come unto him that he may give us Rest for our weary Souls, that labour and are heavy laden with Sin, and the Cares of this World. To be brief, Let every one strive, by all the Means of Grace and Acts of Religion, to arrive at the end of Glory, and so be blessed to all Eternity.

AFTER this short Encouragement to a godly Life, it is requisite I lay down such necessary Helps and proper Rules, as may

wing

wing the Soul with a Desire of mounting towards the happy Regions of Glory and Happiness, enabling it in its Flight to reach the blessed Mansions where all the departed Saints of God are filled with Joy, and where they inhabit with unspeakable Delight, no more to be disturbed with the Cares and Crosses of this World, or hear of Sorrow for ever, but solace themselves in the Bosom of their Beloved, bathe in Rivers of Pleasure, and tread the delicious Paths of Rest, viewing the spacious Mansions of their Eternity, joying to have escaped this miserable Vale of Tears, this Wilderness of Trouble; and first then, let the Soul that panteth after God, and divinely breaths for Rest from its Labours, begin to exercise it self effectually with Meditation and Prayer.

Of Prayer and Meditation.

THESE Two Heavenly Twins have powerful Effects upon the Souls of Men and Women, to raise their Desires so high, as to be wisely placed on Things above, and bring down Blessings from Heaven to Earth. I may truly liken them to the Spies that were sent from the Wilderness to Canaan, to

spy the Land, the one views, and the other gathers the choice Clusters, bring Home a delicious Taste of the Heavenly Fruit.

MEDITATION, like the Eye, views God's Mercies stored up for us; and Prayer, like the Hand, reaches and brings them to us; or Meditation, like a prudent Merchant, goes abroad, and buys up rich Wares; and Prayer, like a Ship with prosperous Gales, brings them safe into the desired Harbour.

IT is our Misery that we cannot be so perfect as to be exempted from wanting; but on the other hand, it is God's infinite Mercy that we are not so miserable as not to be supply'd with what is convenient for us, for whatever real Want Meditation finds out, Prayer on its nimble Wings will fetch in an unanswerable Comfort; therefore, if we trust in the Lord, we cannot be poor, for his Mercies are free. Meditate first to know your Wants, and then pray for a Supply; and if you continue restless in these, the Fountain of all Mercies and of all good Things will supply you with Things needful, above what you are able to ask.

On

On Meditation.

*Despair not when Affliction plows the Ground,
Doubt not encreases, if thy Seed be sound :
God loves a fruitful Harvest, and his Hand
Is always active to manure that Land :
He takes the chiefest Care, and greatest Pains,
He crowns the Work, 'tis we that reap the Gains.*

On Contemplation.

TO contemplate seriously on good Things, is to be truly wise, for as the Eagle fixes her undazled Eyes on the Beams of the Sun, so *Contemplation* stedfastly fixes the Eyes of the Soul on the glorious Son of Righteousness, making it always conversant about the high and profitable Things of its Salvation. It may be also compared to those Sparrows holy *David* speaks of with Admiration, who builded their Nests by the Altar of God ; for *Contemplation* is that Coelestial Bird of Paradise that builds her Nest about the Throne of Glory, the Bee that flies into the Garden of Odours, and extracts the sweetest Honey from every fragrant Flower. By Meditation we converse with God, and solace with our selves ; up then my Soul on the Wing, and leave this

this droffie Earth, to take thy flight for Heaven. Let thy Thoughts be where thy Happinefs is, and let thy holy Desires be where thy Thoughts are, and fo, though thy Habitation be here in a Mansion of Clay, yet shall thy Converfation be in a glorious Mansion, not made with Hands, in the higheft Heavens.

On Contemplation.

*Life is the Life's preparative, and Death.
The Deprivation of unconstant Breath:
A contemplative Life shall always find
Felicity in Death, a glorious Mind
Shall have a glorious and cœlestial Friend
To guard its Glories to a glorious End.*

The Soul's serious Desires and Contemplation.

WHAT are thy Desires, O my Soul? with what imaginable Excellency wouldst thou be cloathed? What desirable Object wouldst thou fix upon? Is it Beauty? then know, that the Righteous shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, and the Wife, as the Brightness of the Firmament for ever. Is it Riches or Honour thou desirest? These are in God's Hand to bestow

at Pleasure, even Treasures and Glory incorruptible, an Eternal Inheritance, that shall never alter or change, amongst the blessed Saints and Angels. Is it pleasure thou desirest? Then know, the Righteous shall enter into their Master's Joy, where are Pleasures unutterable by the Tongues of Angels or Men; even Rivers of Pleasure are at his Right-hand for evermore. If thou wouldest yet have more, even a Confluence of all the glorious Things in Heaven and Earth, consider Godliness is thy Gain, as having the Promise of this Life, and the Life which is to come. If Heaven and the Righteousness thereof be the Things thou dost seek, they with all their Excellencies shall be found of thee; for if the Lord make thee Holy, then thou shalt be sure to be Happy.

To the Soul.

*Dost thou desire, my Soul, to be Partaker
Of those Cæstrial Joys whereof thy Maker
Crowns those endeavouring Souls, that study
still*

To be obedient to his sacred Will.

*Examine well the Scriptures, they will show
The ready way, then practice how to go.*

On the Advantage of Repentance.

WHEN Sin is conceived, it fails not in the end to bring forth Sorrow, for they are inseparable Companions, there is no letting in the one, and shutting out the other; a Moment's Mirth in Wickedness, without Repentance, will be succeeded, not only by a Temporal, but an Eternal Sorrow, which by Repentance and a godly Sorrow for Sin might have been wiped away. If thou wilt not weep whilst Mercy is in store to pardon thy Sins, then shalt thou mourn hereafter, when no Eye shall pity thee; a few Penitent Tears may now, in this thy Day, quench the Fire of Sin; but a Sea of Weeping will never be able to quench the Flames of Hell. Therefore, whilst the wicked are in their Laughter and Jolity, let those that are wise to their Salvation, go rather to the House of Mourning, that from a vale of Tears they may ascend the glorious *Mount Zion*, the Hill of God; whilst the Paths of rejoicing in Evil, lead down to a Hell of Weeping: He that swims in Sin, shall sink in the Gulf of Sorrow. A Woe is pronounced to those that laugh now, *viz. They shall mourn hereafter, and their Laughter shall be turned into Heaviness;*

ness; whilst those that Weep shall have
their Tears wiped away. I will therefore
now weep for my Sins, that so I may not
weep for ever, when it is too late to repent
me of them.

A Meditation on Repentance.

*Dost thou desire, my Soul, that God should say
Thy Pardon's seal'd, and I will blot away
Thy numerous Sins; nay, and I will no more
Remember them, as I have done before.*

*Mourn thou in Time, lest Mourning come
too late,*

And thou unprofitably weep in a lost State.

On Living and Dying.

A S Life is, so will Death be, there is
no remove in the Grave, but in the State we
fall, in the same we must arise; for as we
are in Life, so we lie down to Eternity;
whether we tend towards Heaven or Hell,
so will it be with us in the latter Day of our
great Account; for as in War an Error
proves Death; so in Death, an Error found
without Repentance, is Damnation, there-
fore be careful to live as thou intendest to
die, and die as thou intendest to live Eter-
nally. O Lord! let the Tendency of my
Soul

Soul be always towards thee, that falling into the Chambers of the Grave, I may directly encline to thee, and ever rest with thee in a blessed Eternity.

On the Vanity of the World considered.

O MY precious and immortal Soul! what makes thee spend thy Time in grovelling on this sublunary Earth amongst clods of Clay, to defile thy Beauty in the Dust? Things below are too base and unworthy for thine Excellency, too brittle and momentary for thy Eternity; thou art capable of Heaven, and must have a Being, when all worldly Glories fade away, and are reduced to nothing: All things here are too base to unite into a Crown of Glory, to adorn thy excellent Nature, too leaky a Bark to waft thee through Eternity. O fill thy self then with the Glory that beams from his Brightness who gave thee Being, and so shalt thou raise thy Dignity and Honour transcendently above this Mole-hill Earth, to live and reign with Christ, thy Redeemer, for ever.

On Christian Caution.

WHEN any thing that looks but like the shadow of a Temptation prompts thee to Act, consider seriously with thy self, the Pattern of his Holy Life, who with his rich Redeeming Blood has bought thee as with a precious Price, and see if it be agreeable to it; or whether it would not have been offensive to him even when he was cloathed with Flesh, and to save us took our Nature upon him; or if you were about to die, whether or no you would comply with, or account it as an Evil to be shunned and avoided; then say to your soul, if any thing of Offence appears in what you are prone to do, I must walk as Christ walked, and I must now live as I intend to dye. If this be not Christ's Will, who is my Head, and the Captain of my salvation, it is then my Sin; and if I am taken hence in that Sin, unrepented of, it will be my Eternal Ruin: I will therefore, in every Action of my Life, so carry and behave my self as if Christ were on the one Hand to direct me, and the Terrors of Death on the other Hand to affright me from doing Evil; so living as I ought to live, and so dying as I ought to die, that
Eternal

Eternal Life in Glory may be my happy Portion, after this transitory Life shall have an end.

On a Christian's Choice.

SERIOUSLY consider and say to your Soul, tho' my Body is frail and decaying, the World and all its Appearances fading, yet thou, O my Soul! art Immortal, and God is Eternal; if thou lean upon any Creature for help, either like an Eagle it will wing it self and fly away, or else deceive thee at thy Need, by being Helpless and Impotent. Remember how all the rich Man's large Possessions could not in the tormenting Flame purchase him one drop of Water to cool his Tongue, but rather the remembrance of his past Luxuries and Riot augmented his Pain; but in rejecting all these, and choosing God for thy Portion, thy Lot will fall in a fair Land, and he will be to thee a goodly Inheritance; then Mercy and Goodness shall follow thee whilst here on Earth, and Glory and Eternity shall Crown thee when thou ascendest to the Father of Spirits. Therefore now forsake what thou shalt soon lose, that so thou mayest embrace that unspeakable Good which shall always abide with thee.

On the Life of Faith to a Christian.

HE is indeed a Christian worth admiring, that will freely, and without constraint, part with all for Christ, though the Gain be in that more exceeding than all others, for then he has truly purchased the Pearl of great price, even a Treasure of Life and Immortality, and will live by Faith in him : But, O how few do we find thus enclined ! This often stops the running Professor in his full career, and makes him sorrowfully retire. *Crates* the philosopher, indeed voluntarily threw all his Goods into the Sea, saying, *I had rather drown you, than you me* ; meaning thereby rendering him in the freedom of his Study by his Mind often reflecting on them, for he concluded Riches and Vertue were incompatible : And *Alexander the Great*, when he had given all his Treasure amongst his favourites, being asked what he would leave himself ; answered, *Hope*. But how many Christians are there, that in their Way to Christ serve Mammon at the same time, refusing to cast their Bread upon the Water ? But such as will not renounce all the Riches, Vanities, and Affections of the World for Christ, may truly expect to fall

short of having any Share in him, considering, in this Case, he lives but the Life of Sense, and not that of Grace. Therefore, O Lord, of what I have, freely take what thou art pleased to call for, since Christ be my Portion as a Reward, I am Rich in abundance.

• *Of the Vanity of Humane Life.*

O MOST Gracious Lord God, how like a shadow is the Life of Man, like the Fumes of Smoke, or a Bubble blown into the Air, a meer nothing in comparison to thee: The Time past, that's gone as a Bird escaped from the Fowler, quite fled out of sight: The Time present, is vanishing like the Eagle, soaring above the Clouds. The Time to come remains uncertain whether it shall be ours or not; we cannot command one Moment, and when the Sun sets it may never rise upon us more; therefore, O Lord, in this Hour make me sure of thee, since in the next I am not sure of my self, but may e'er then descend to the Shades of Death.

On the Day of Grace.

O, MY Soul! consider that Grace which must guide thee in thy Way, and inspire thee with good Motions tending to Eternal Life, is the Gift of God alone, which under the Gospel of his Blessed Son, he gives to enlighten thee, removing by it the dark Clouds of Sin and Ignorance which else would o'er-shadow thee, and leave thee in the Valley of Death, benighted and comfortless; but thy Day of Grace once shining on thee, it will illuminate and fill thee with Beams of Mercy; therefore be careful not to o'erslip it, lest being past, it return not again, and then of all Things thou art most miserably bewildred in a Labyrinth, out of which thou canst not wind thy self to any Good; neglect not then the golden Opportunity, for when wilt thou repent if thou art hardened in these melting Times, when Grace and Salvation are so freely offered? For O what Day shall that Soul find to go to Heaven, that sins away the Gospel-Days! or what Grace shall it find for Sin, that shall sin away the Day of Grace! to whom shall that Soul appeal, that shall renounce Jesus Christ! O what blackness and darkness is reserved for

for that Soul which shall walk in Darkness in the midst and under such clearness of Light! we are those that are not only lifted up to Heaven, but Heaven, as in a golden Chain, is let down to us O thou Gospel-Christian, thou art now under the clearest Demonstration of Christ, the sweet Invitation of Mercy, the large Manifestation of Love, be careful then and consider to keep to the Right-hand, lest thro' Carelessness straying amiss, and stumbling on the dark Mountains of Sloath and Negligence, thou fallest into utter Destruction.

Contemplation of a Religious Life.

O M Y Soul! turn to the Lord and praise him in the Beauty of his Holiness and he will have Mercy on thee; thy God will abundantly pardon. If thou hast formerly, with the World, accounted the Spirit of a Christian to be Melancholy, and a kind of Madness, and the Ways of Holiness, only an unpleasant Path leading to the Defart of sad Retiredness, look again with Eyes of Love and Faith, then wilt thou see the hidden Manna which the World is ignorant of, glorious Joys which strangers come not nigh, and the nearer and exacter a Christian walks, thou wilt find

he sweeter is his Repast ; then it will appear, that thy former Thoughts of parting with Pleasures and Delights, to embrace a soul-humbling, and Self-denying Duties, that were so grievous to thee, will be changed, and make thee say with *S. Austin*, *O how sweet it is to want my former Sweetness? It is now my rejoycing to be without my former Joys, for now I plainly see there is a Heaven in the Way to Heaven; one Look of Faith's, one Smile of Christ's, one Glance of Heaven, one Grape of Canaan, one Glimpse of my Crown of Glory yields more Comforts, Sweetness and Delights than all this World affords; the very Gleanings of Spiritual Joys, is far beyond the full Vintage of Carnal Delights.* Let no Man then stand at a Distance for want of Pleasure, for in this Way he shall not lose them, but change them infinitely for the better.

On the Christian's Heaven and Hell.

WHERE God is with Mercies, and Sweet Comforts to the Soul, there is Heaven; where he withdraws his amiable Countenance, and changing into Terror, lets his Justice in its rigor take place, there it is Hell: You that can see no Beauty and Comeliness in Christ, nor Glory in Heaven

ven, do you likewise see no Flame in Hell
 no Hell in Loss of him who is your only
 stay and support: You therefore that can
 not be taken with his Presence, O tremble
 at his Absence; and you that care not to
 be with him, O fear and tremble exceed-
 ingly to be without him, for this is Hell on
 Earth; viz. Depart from us, and this is
 Hell when we leave the World; viz. De-
 part from me, Lord, thou art my Heaven
 and my Happiness, that I may be with thee
 here, so as to be ever with thee hereafter.

The Soul's Communion.

IT is observable, that the nearer the
 Moon draws to be in Conjunction with the
 glorious Planet of the Day, the brighter
 it shines towards the Heavens, and turns
 dimmer Aspect towards the Earth; so the
 nearer the Soul draws in Communion with
 Christ Jesus, the brighter and more com-
 y it appears in the Eye of its beloved
 Spouse, and the darker it turns to the Things
 of this World. He that is Glorious to
 Heavenly Saint, is despised and rejected by
 carnal minded Men; it becomes, as the
 Cloud did to the Egyptian Host, a thick
 Darkness, when to the Israelites it gave
 Light.

Light as the brightness of the Morning. It
only is a sign those Souls move in a Terrestrial
Orb that can see no Lustre in Celestial
Light : But, O my gracious God, let me
not shine bright unto thee, and I care not how
obscurely I appear in the Eyes of the World.

Of Christian Courage and Patience.

IN our spiritual Warfare it highly be-
comes us to be courageous in manfully fight-
ing under Christ's Banner, and patient in
suffering all Injuries and Indignities for
his sake ; though the Worldling mock to
see a Christian melting into Tears at the
Word of God, and trembling at a sin, yet
there is of a noble Courage that can triumph
at Death and Judgment ; it is not the King
of fears that can appaul him, or Hell it
self that can afright him, but over these,
and in all his Sufferings, he is more than
conqueror ; through Christ that loveth
him he can leave the World smiling, and
boldly say, O Death where is thy Sting ? O
grave and Hell where is your Victory ? Whilst
he who wants this spirit of Assurance to
bear him up, is cowardly, and cast down
on every Occasion ; his Conscience starts
at Sickness, and the fear of a mortal change ;
y, even light Afflictions, sink him un-

der a Load of Sorrow; his Patience is lost and his Complaints; a grievous Terror shakes his Joints, and Shadows fright him into Agonies, whilst the righteous Man is bold as a Lyon, bears his Afflictions with Constancy and Patience, fearless in time of Trouble, because the Lord is his sure support and stay in all Adversity.

No Man truly Happy without Holiness

WE find a general Inclination in all Men to be Happy in their end, but few are so wise as to chase Holiness for their way; all would willingly have the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Glory thereof, yet very few are inclinable to seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Righteousness thereof. They would have the easie and perishing Delights of this World and Heaven, at the cheap Rate of only asking for, without any more endeavouring to obtain unspeakable Glories; though they would like *Balaam*, live the Life of the Wicked, but desire to die the Death of the Righteous; but these are Contradictions not to be reconciled, for no Soul can go to God in Death, but the Soul that in Life draws near unto him. If the Kingdom of God be not in our Hearts, we shall never enter in.

it; no Soul can expect the Joys of Heaven hereafter, but such a one who leads a heavenly Life whilst on Earth; none shall enter the Gates of Felicity, but those that tread the narrow Path of Piety; therefore, O most merciful God, make me Holy, as well as Happy, that I may love as well to glorifie thee, as to be glorified of thee.

The Misery of Wickedness.

A wicked Life is such an evil in it self, that even its darling Delights have Stings in them to torture and torment; worm-wood and Gall is mixed with every pleasant Potion, even the Manna of a wicked Man turns to Worms e'er he can taste it; his very Mercies make him miserable; look into his Possessions, how large soever, and you will find his Disquiets give him not the comfort of enjoying them aright; tho' he has the pain and trouble of keeping them, which takes from, and not adds to his Comfort; or if in some measure he enjoys it, he doth nevertheless so wretchedly abuse it, that he makes that which for use is but temporal, for Punishment to be eternal. Alas! the pleasures of Sin at best are but for a season, and quickly over, but the Bitterness of them remains for ever: there-

fore, O glorious Lord, enable me to improve thy Mercies, or else thy Mercies will in the end but improve my Miſery.

Of Divine LOVE.

DIVINE Love is of ſo excellent a nature, that it is hardly to be expreſſed by words as it ought; it runs purely out of it ſelf into the Boſom of the Object that is beloved: Divine Love is centered no where but in heavenly Minds, never preſſing lower than it ſelf; it is only God it loves, and it is only in God that it lives in full Perfection. If this exalted Love is a Beam, it is only as it ſtands in reference to the Sun; if it loves the Creature, it is only as a Step to advance it nearer God; without this Love, even Heaven it ſelf would want its Joys, but this makes a fullneſs inexpressible of all that is delightful and glorious to Angels and Holy Men.

The Soul's Deſire.

AS Bees are not ſatiſfied with Flowers nor the Graſs with Dews, but ſtill requiring more and more, ſo the Soul of Man cannot be ſatiſfied with what this lower World affords; Heaven is its proper Element, and

Chriſt

Christ is the Centre of it: Heaven is its breathing place, and Christ its resting place: it cannot truly live out of that Element nor rest out of this Centre; it is always struggling to ascend, whilst imprisoned in its Mansion of Clay, and struggling and restless till it comes to Christ its rest. Lord let me always breath the heavenly Air in Truth and Righteousness, and never let me rest till I rest in thee, and so be eternally happy.

The Prudent Choice.

CONSIDER, O my Soul, wisely to chuse thy Portion, whilst Time and Opportunity freely offers thee Leisure; consider, I say, if God be the highest Perfection in himself, and the highest Good in the Creature, then it is the most exalted Wisdom to make thy Choice of him, and the highest Duty of the Creature to live in Obedience and Observance to his divine Will. If all must certainly appear before his tremendous Majesty, and bow unto him, then is the Wisdom of the Godly to be had in Admiration, and the Folly of the Wicked to be pitied; and seeing this certainly and of necessity must be, Lord let me be of the Number of those that make choice of the

here, so that I may for ever hereafter enjoy thy amiable Presence, and not going out of this World, be found of the Number of those whose Folly has rejected thee, and must (O miserable) for ever hereafter be excluded thy Presence, in which is fulness of Pleasure for evermore.

Advantage to be gained by Adversity.

A D V E R S I T Y is as a Touchstone to try our Faith and Patience, so that by suffering for Righteousness sake, we may be found worthy, and stand upright in the Day of our Tryal; by it we are tryed as in the Fire, to know whether we are pure Gold or Dross, or at least to refine our Natures, and wean us from delighting in the Things of this World; when, as on the other hand, Prosperity makes us supine, careless, and negligent of the end for which we were created; it is like an exuberant Sucker, drawing plentifully from the Root, steals the spiritual Sap and celestial Vigour, that should nourish the Soul, and so debilitates the principles of Growth and Life, when as *Adversity* sucks away only the dross and dregs, leaving the best Nourishment behind, to make the Soul grow in Grace and all godly Vertues, that so it may flourish

flourish by the well-spring of Life here-
after.

On the Performance of our Duty to God.

O, MY Soul, consider thy Duty to God aright, as thou oughtest to do, and then thou wilt be rightly Happy ; it is upright with God, when it turns thee into the very Nature of its self: *Neapolitan* is praised by *S. Hierom*, That by his continual Reading, and daily Meditation, he made his Breast a very Library of Christ, which is indeed, the true Praise of a Christian, for when he shall so read and hear, that the Word abideth in his Heart, it is as it were incorporated in him, and he becomes a living Epistle, so that the World may read over again in his Life, what he before hath read in the World ; and when he shall so bless God as to make himself a living Testimony of his Praise, every Petition shall, as a living Vein, run through his Practice when his Duty shall be the Fire, and his Life the Incense, that is the only sweet acceptable Sacrifice ; till Duty is distilled into Practice, it is but an empty Cloud ; till Duties become as Victuals to nourish our Souls, and support us in all our ways. Lord therefore let my Duties be

dead Performance, but receive Life from thy Spirit; and let all my Actions receive Life from those Duties.

Blessings from God to be used for God.

GOD being the fulness of all Blessedness, from whom all good Things proceed, as the Rivers which have their Springs and Supplies from the vast Ocean gratefully run into it, so those Blessings that come from God must always be employed for his Praise and Glory; what is received from his Mercy, he must have it returned to his Honour; the least we can give for all the Benefits we receive, of Life, Health, Strength, Food, Raiment, and our hourly Preservation, is a grateful Acknowledgment, with Praise and Thanksgiving. Therefore, O Lord, whatsoever I enjoy, let me find thee in it and serve thee with it.

God is to be loved for himself.

CONSIDERING the Excellent Nature of God, and his great Love to Mankind, with all the singular Benefits he bestows on us, how infinitely ought we to love him, the Author of our Being, and of our Well Being? Love should always be the

the Life of Motion; that Soul goes true
 that hath pure Love for its Balance, and
 truly loves when it hath a true Object to
 centre it: A gracious Spirit loves God, not
 for the Bounties he plentifully showers on
 but because he is all Goodness; that
 friends Affection is lightly to be esteemed
 that prefers a fluent Sweetness, before an
 inherent Goodness; that Soul which loves
 Christ for himself, though all Obligements
 be taken away, there is strength in Love
 to move and constrain the Soul to a bound-
 less passionate Desire of enjoying him. O
 blessed be that Soul, Lord, that is so rap-
 tured with thy Love, as truly to say, were
 there neither Heaven nor Hell, that Holi-
 ness shall be my Heaven, and Sin my Hell;
 the one because it pleaseth thee, and the
 other because it is detested in thy sight.

The Evil of SIN.

SIN brought into the World with it a
 world of Miseries and Woes, and still con-
 tinues them as temporal Punishments here,
 and if not timely repented of, eternal Pu-
 nishments hereafter; shun it then as the grea-
 test Evil, and when it presents it self, look
 upon it with tears; if it attempts to close
 with thee, shake it with detestation from

thy Arms, though it appears in a glittering Dress; for be assured, it has no other aim than to ruin thy precious and immortal Soul; for if it once become thy Master, thy Wages will be Death; a Death to which all the Torments in the World are not comparable; it will deface in thee, all that is good and beautiful, and then, leave thee naked and open to divine Vengeance, and the Wrath of that God, who in his Fury is a consuming Fire.

HOLY

HOLY LIVING,

WITH

Suitable DIRECTIONS

TO

Lead a Godly Life in this World.

Motives and Directions in general and particular, for a Holy Way of Living.

SEEING Man, of all the visible Creation, stands highest in the Favour of GOD, and that he has endued him with an excellent Nature, Wisdom, Choice, an understanding Soul, and an immortal spirit, placing him far above other Creature in Rule and Dominion over these lower created Beings, and but a little lower than the Angels, it is highly convenient, and absolutely necessary, that he should not only be filled with a sense of Joy, but one more exceeding of Gratitude, and a daily Acknowledgment with Praise and Thanksgiving to God, his most merciful and all-wise Creator and Preserver; not only for
Mercy

Mercies and Benefits already received, but for what may be further expected in this Life, and those thereby attainable in the unspeakable Glories of another Life; to be raised to the Joys of which, and glorifie his Maker, was the main end of his Creation, and without performing on his part, what in him lies, he cannot but expect to be eternally miserable, and then it had been good for him that he had never had a Being.

NOW to have a Title to God's Love and Favour, Man can no ways lay Claim to it, but by Service and Obedience, for though every one is God's Title and Portion by right of Creation, yet to stand in his good Opinion, all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls and Bodies, must be employed in his Service, even all the Days of our appointed Time till our Change comes; that so when Death shall set us free from the innumerable Troubles, Cares, and Calamities, Attendants on humane Life, in this Vale of Misery and Tears, we may live with him for ever in a blessed Eternity.

IN the Way of *Holy Living*, then it is not sufficient that the Service of God be impressed in our Minds, as a Work of the least Necessity, or small Importance, but that daily, and with much Diligence and Caution, it be performed and done by us

ut s God intended it, which must be with
his great Earnestness, and an enflaming passio-
n-ate Love, with Reverence, Awe, and fer-
ent Zeal, panting, longing, and Soul-
be-breathing Desires after him, not starting at
his any Labour, Difficulty or Danger, but al-
on, ways, with a forward Willingness, and
that pressing on to the Mark of our high Cal-
er-ling; we must endeavour to improve every
od Opportunity, and not esteem any Time so
ove well spent as that which is laid out in serving
aim o good and gracious a God, the rich Foun-
for ain of divine Essence, from whom all
orti-Mercies, and all good Things stream to us,
d in and so by all the Ways of Religion, holy
Fa-Duties, Grace, and Prudence, we may at
em-ast arrive at the end of Glory, and spring
s of up to Scepters and Crowns in a Kingdom
nes; that shall never have end; which God of
a the his infinite Mercy grant we may all do,
ami-and so be eternally Happy, through his
this Mercies, in the Merits of Jesus Christ, ou
live-er blessed Saviour. Amen.

Consideration

Considerations on the Shortness of Man's Life, and how it ought to be imployed and improved in a Holy Way of Living, and the Danger of Delay, or putting Off Repentance.

IT is one main Point in gaining Happiness and Glory hereafter, seriously to weigh and consider the Value of our precious Time allowed to sow the good Seed in, that it may spring up in our well-doing, and bring us a full Harvest of Godly Joy, to supply us in our greatest Need, with all that is needful for Soul and Body.

INDEED, if we rightly cast it in our Minds as we ought, and seriously consider how great a part of our Lives is taken up in the Needs of Nature, how many Years are gone over our Heads before we come to a right understanding of the Things that belong to our Peace, or that our Reason is useful to us in any material Purpose, and various other Hinderances that intrude in spite of our Discretion and Vigilance, we shall find the small Portion of Hours, that remain for the practice of Piety and holy Duties, for religiously walking with God, and observing his Commandments, so few

and

and inconsiderable, that was not his Goodness infinitely extended to us, it might seem unreasonable, if not altogether impossible, that vile Dust and Ashes should ever arise to the Joys of Angels, to see the beatifick Vision of God in Glory, and become Inhabitants of Heaven; for the well-spending a few Minutes in imperfect Service, when the greater part of our Lives has been trifled away in pursuing Vanity, or serving our inordinate Desires; yet so infinitely Good and Gracious is the God we have to deal withal, that for a few Moments of devout Prayer, and the Exercise of pious Life, he permits the Seeds of our true Contrition to sprout out and become Stock of Glory.

GOD hath indeed given Man but short and uncertain time to live upon Earth which ought to be well husbanded at all times, and on all occasions, seeing that upon the good Improvement of it, all depends to make Man Happy, for there is no Repentance in the Dust; none can praise him in the Grave, but upon this Time given, certainly depends an Eternity of Happiness or Misery, so that for every Minute, after we come to the Years of Knowledge Good and Evil, we must give an Account at the last great Day how we have spent

and if it be found we have not improved it to God's Glory as we ought, for the Salvation of our Souls, our evil spending it, or sloathful neglect, will rise up in Judgment to condemn us, and then with shame we shall be put to silence.

A Holy Living reduced to Practice, and what to do for the Salvation of our Souls, and obtaining Eternal Life.

TO live Holily, and spend our Time as we ought, consider, as an enabling you to do it, the following Directions, and improve them in Practice to your eternal Comfort.

CA **S**T away all Idleness and Sloath, for these make you like one dead in the World, unconcerned or unmindful of your State here and hereafter; for the idle Person only lives to spend his time, and like a Vermine eat the Fruits of the Earth, and perish when his time of Dying comes; but the way to improve and secure our time, is to cast off Sloath, and be always up and upon our Duty. As thus;

IN the Morning, when by your self, think first upon God, or something in order to his Service, and neither awake, nor
close

close your Eyes, without Prayer and Thanksgiving for the Mercies received.

BE diligent in an honest Calling, and let the Intervals or Spaces of Opportunity from urgent Affairs, be employed in reading the Holy Scriptures, and other good Books; Meditation, Prayer, Works of Charity, Friendship, Neighbourhood, and means of spiritual and corporal Health, ever remembering so to work in your Calling, as not to neglect the Work of your high Calling.

A VOID Temptation and all bad Company, that may draw you away to sin against God, nor spend your time in idle Talking, but consider every Day well spent, may become a Day of Salvation, and that Time rightly employed is an acceptable Time.

AT all times have God in your Mind, and as often as you may, put up short Ejaculations and Prayers; give Thanks to him, and pray for the Abundance of his Grace, and the Continuance of his Care and Protection over you, and in no case be found doing the Work of God negligently, nor be found loitering and idling in his Service: Let your Condition be high or low, for God is no Respector of Persons, Honour, or high Birth is no Excuse for not labouring in his Vineyard, if you expect the

the Reward; for he requires the same Obedience and Service of Kings and Potentates, in their several Stations he has placed them in, as of the meanest Cottager.

GIVE Respect to all Men, do good to all Men, honour your Parents and Governors, and be friendly, loving, and charitable to your Neighbours, of what rank and degree soever, as they stand in Need of your Friendship, Advice, or Assistance.

FREQUENT the Places of public Worship with all Reverence, Meekness and fervent Devotion, preparing your self a worthy Communicant of the Holy Sacrament, by ordering the frame of your Heart aright towards God and Men, and your Actions in all Things, to your power void of Offence; pray in private in your Closet, and in your Families, and with good Council and Advice exhort the wavering, and support the weak, and in the well employing our Time in a holy way of Living, this Good will follow, *viz.*

IT teaches us to avoid Evil, and engages us in doing Good, as the proper Business of all our Days; it is greatly Instrumental in preventing the smallest Sins and Irregularities of our Lives, which usually creep in upon Idleness, and disemployed and dissipated Persons, and so prepares us against

sudden Sin and

Ob sudden Changes, that we shall not easily be
 surprized at the sudden coming of the Day
 of our Lord ; for he that is curious to spend
 his Time well, will not be easily unprovi-
 ded, unfurnished, or unready to meet him,
 but rather hasten to meet him with Joy,
 because then he knows his Redemption is
 at hand.

*Self-Examination ; or trying the frame
and temper of our Hearts, to know if
we are in the right way of Living
Holily in the sight of God.*

Another thing exceedingly necessary to contribute to a Holy Living, is a sober and serious Self-Examination, which chiefly, as an Introduction to what else may be necessary on Immergencies, may be thus.

DO I love the Lord with all my Heart, with all my Strength? Is my Love entire to him, and to him only? Do I grieve to offend him, and hate Sin, because it is hateful in his Sight as Sin.

H A V E I set my Heart upon his Laws,
 and made them my delight always, been
 increased in obeying his Will, or doing his
 commandments, or been grieved, or re-
 grieved others, doing contrary to his Will
 Sin and Disobedience. H A V E

HAVE I taken care to try and examine my Ways, and search out my secret Sins, that deceitfully lurk in the corners of my Heart?

HAVE I been humbled, and broken before God my Maker, for doing what I ought not to do, and doing what I ought not to have done?

HAVE I been meek and humble, patient in Affliction, and not puffed up proud or exalted in Prosperity? Have I taken up my Cross, when offered with willingness, and followed Christ?

DO I believe in the blessed Trinity, Unity, Three Persons and One God, eternal, all powerful, wise, and glorious, by whom all Things were made, and are continued and preserved? Do I frequent God's Service and Holy Mysteries, ordained for the Benefit of my Soul, &c.

DO I love my Neighbour as myself, do I visit the Sick, comfort and relieve the Afflicted with my Substance, or good Advice, to the benefit of their Souls and Bodies, labouring to rescue the Oppressed from the Burthen of the Oppressor? And to conclude in this, do I all the good Offices I can purely for the Love I bear to God and my Neighbour? If these, and what else is convenient and necessary

My Christian Calling, I do unfeignedly
with a sincere Heart, with all Lowliness
and Humility, then what I do cannot be
displeasing in the sight of God, nor want
its Reward in the labour of Love; but
I have been remiss in these, or done o-
therwise, then I have mispent my Time,
and lived unholily, and with Tears and
repentance must labour without delay to
redeem it, that I may make my Peace be-
fore I go hence, and am no more seen;
lest Death and Darkness overtake me, and
be lost for ever.

*A further Encouragement to a Holy Li-
ving, from God's willingness to assist
and help us in a repenting State, if
we endeavour to follow the Example
Christ has set us.*

AS for the Assistance of God, if we do
our part in holy Duties, with a willing and
cheerful Mind, we need not doubt it, for
He that has promised it is Truth it self, in
whom is no varying or shadow of Change,
God that is both able, willing, and ready
to help us on all Occasions, if our will and
desire be agreeable and compliant with his
holy Will and Commandments, in a
Ru

Rules he hath prescribed us, and the Way he hath directed us to walk in.

IN the first place then, let every Christian pray for God's Assistance in all his Undertakings, for no Man hath strength of his own sufficient against humane Frailties and Temptations, unless he be supported by God's Spirit, which is only able to make him wise unto Salvation; and as for his Will, it is that which his beloved Son hath taught us, and did himself whilst he was on Earth, being obedient to the Will of his Father in all Things, *viz.* Constancy in Well-doing, humble in Behaviour, modest in Speech, doing Actions of Justice and Works of Mercy and Compassion; patient of Injuries, peaceable and even praying for his Enemies, which great and blessed Example he set for his Followers to imitate, that so we should walk void of Offence towards God and Man, taking heed with all imaginable care and diligence that we offend not either: Therefore, following the Example of our blessed Saviour

who is our Head, and we his Members, let

Obedience be steadfast in all good works, and our Love to him unalterable, preferring nothing before or equal to him, so preferring nothing before us, laying down even his Life a Ransom for us

and if we truly love God, thus it may be shown.

LOVE does all Things that may please the Beloved Person, it performs all his commands, and this is one of the greatest Instances and Arguments, that God requires of us, viz. This is Love that we keep his Commandments; Love is obedient, it obeys both all the Intimations and Significations of his Pleasure whom we love; it relieves all that he would have relieved; it patiently suffers all Things that are imposed by its beloved, or that can befall for his sake.

THIS Love, in the highest degree, consists in loving God with all our Heart, with all our undivided Affections, giving no part of it to any Creature but what he allows of; and this Love is that which bears the Soul to its beloved Object, even to God himself, which in part, is the exceeding Comfort of the Soul here, and will be fully so hereafter; and to excite us to this Love, meditate as follows.

A Holy Meditation on God's Mercies towards us, &c.

AH! how boundless and infinite is God's Love towards me, poor vile Creature? What am I but Dust and Ashes! formed out

out of nothing valuable, and yet what gracious God have I to deal withal? For although I cannot add the least Atom to his glorious and blessed State, yet, O wonderful! in meer Love and Compassion towards me sinful Creature, as if I might oblige him, or he could not be without me, he pursues me with his Favours and Blessings; loading me with the Bounties of his Love, and has made his Angels Guard over me to keep me from innumerable Dangers I else might hourly fall into; and other Creatures he has put in Subjection under me; he has moreover given me an understanding Will and Memory; my Body vigorous and active, fit for several Employments; and therefore, as I made no merit of my self, nor had these Endowments bestowed on me from God my Maker, there is all the Reason imaginable that I should return the sincerest Acknowledgements of Love and Obedience to his Divine Will, in resigning my Soul, Will, and Affections, to be governed and guided by him, and to be altogether at his Disposal. *Moses* tells us, that we were created, and *S. Luke* intimates, That for no other end were we Redeemed, than to serve God in Holiness and Righteousness all our Days.

O LORD, suffer me not then to trifle
 away my precious time, allowed by thee to
 raise me to a higher State of Happiness,
 and to rescue me from the Bondage and
 slavery to which I am by Nature enthrall-
 ed, but give me Grace and Wisdom to con-
 sider, as I ought, the Preciousness of an
 immortal Soul, to save which, that it may
 be glorified, is the main end of my coming
 into the World; let then no Difficulties or
 dangers be able to hinder me in my Tra-
 vel through this Wilderness to the Holy and
 heavenly *Jerusalem*; let all the glittering
 pomp, and seeming Glories of this frail
 world, be to my Soul as Dross and Dung;
 let it relish nothing as sweet and savory, but
 those things that tend to its Peace and Joy,
 leading it to the Arms of its blessed Re-
 deemer, who has paid so dear a Ransome
 for it as his own precious Life.

*Exhortations and Preparations to a Ho-
 ly Dying, that we may Live with God
 Eternally.*

TO Live is natural to all, but to live so
 that we may die well, and after that rise to
 eternal Life, is no easie Task; for he that
 would die well, must always be looking

for Death, every day knocking at the Gate of the Grave, and then the Gates of the Grave shall have no Power to prevail against him to his hurt ; Man's Life is momentary and uncertain, that even Cred Writers, and the wisest among the Philosophers, compare it to things of the shortest Duration, that appear and fade away or vanish in the twinkling of an Eye. *S. James* says our Life is but a Vapor which is only seen and vanishes ; *Job* compares it to a Span long, a Shadow and a Smoak ; it is elsewhere compared to a Flower of the Field that fadeth, Grass that is cut down, and withers e'er the evening Sun. *Homer* terms it a Leaf, and others a very Nothing ; and all this is small and less, compared with that vast and endless Eternity, which when it fails, we may assuredly enter upon ; and yet this short Life is all the Talent lent us to trade for Everlasting Glory and Happiness, which being neglected or misemploy'd, will never ever take hold of Eternity, but then it will be a miserable one, worse than ten thousand Deaths.

We come indeed from the Womb, if we escape the Perils and Dangers that attend even being born like an opening Rose Bud, first fair as the Morning, and

like a Fleece with the Dew of Heaven, but when a rude Breath of Air has forced wide open its Virgin Modesty, and spread abroad its fragrant Folds, that Rose which seemed so gay, begins to put on Darkness, and declines to Softness, the Symptoms of sickly Age, it bows the Head, and at Night some of its Leaves drop off, and the Morrow's Sun withers the rest, so that falling, they are lost in a Bed of Weeds. Some again have no other Business but to be born, that they may die; and indeed, the longest Age is the most grievous and troublesome, for many, considering their attendant Pains and Miseries, Vexations and Troubles, may be said to out-live themselves, and take long Life as their greatest Affliction in this World.

THESE things, and many more of the like Nature, considered, we may rightly conclude, that (besides sudden Death, and the many Accidents that wait on every Hour of our Life to snatch it away if our Hopes aim at more transcendent Joys than this World can afford) we must always be on our Guard, ever preparing for Death, as not knowing at what Hour it will come and seize our Lives. We see daily Instances of Funerals and Surprizes; Youth, Strength, Riches, or Beauty have no De-

fence against the King of Terrors, no Plea will be sufficient to stay his inexorable Hand, Kings environ'd with Armies, cannot be defended from the impartial Stroke of Death, no Guards can keep him off, and nothing avail in that Hour, but a Life well spent; Vertue alone can Triumph over him; though he leads the Body down to the Chambers of the Dust, for then, breaking his Adamantine Chains, when called to arise by the Trumpet's sound, it will arise to Glory and Immortality, no more to be subject to Death's Power, meeting the long separated Soul with Joy, for ever to be united with in Bliss.

Considerations of the Shortness and Uncertainty of Man's Life, and Inferences drawn from thence, always to be preparing to die.

CONSIDERING the Shortness of Life, nay more than that, its Uncertainty, so that no prefixed Time is allowed any on Earth, our Business should be every Day to prepare to Death, as if we were certainly to die on the Morrow, or soon, and not even in our Blooming Youth, to prevent off Repentance from Day to Day, to prevent

due Folly and Vanity, and promise it in
riper Years, with over assurance we shall live
till then, because some few have attained
extream old Age, and dropt like mellowed
Fruit into the Silence of the Grave; this
is a kind of Madness, for when we sacrifice
our Youth to Folly, our Manhood to Lust
and Rage, what can we expect old Age,
should we attain it, to be capable of, but Co-
vetousness and Irreligion, the Briars and
Thorns that spring up from the rooted Sins
of our foregoing Years.

IT is a sad and melancholy thing thus
to put off Repentance, and not think of
beginning to live till we are to die, desig-
ning the Dregs of Life to pursue vertuous
Ways, which is indeed infirm to every
thing, and good for nothing, nay even
that Craftiness and Interest will steal away.
This is like a Man's setting forth on a Jour-
ney, when Night approaches, the Storms
beat, and the cloudy Sky pours down Tem-
pests of Rain, so that Floods, Inundati-
ons and Darkness beset him on every side
the way; he is to go mîry and forlorn, so that
he is bewildred, and at every Step in Dan-
ger to be lost.

O SHUN this dangerous Way, and
consider yet better, whilst you have time;
all you that are lovers of your Souls, con-
sider,

sider, that being consecrated by a forward Zeal, and list'd under Christ's Banner manfully to fight against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, that all your Time is to be appropriated to that holy Warfare, so soon as you shall come to Years of Knowledge, and that it is a holy Education, a complying Obedience in Childhood, a chaste temperate, modest, and industrious Youth, a religious and sober Manhood, which can bring you to a religious old Age, and in so walking we have no cause to repine, when our Change comes, be it sooner or later, changed into a just time, to the Preparations of a better Life, and this is truly to live, that Death may have no Power over us to hurt us.

I T is one of the Devil's main Temptations, wherewith he assaults us, to put off our Repentance from time to time, bearing us in Hand, that in Youth it is too soon to repent, for that will imbitter our Pleasures and Delights in Manhood, for then it will take up the Business of our Affairs, and curb us in our Progress of gaining Riches, and flatters every one with a long Series of Life, wherein there will be time enough that we may spare, as then having nothing else to do or mind, a Time of Freedom and Ease, sequestered from all the Hurries and

and Cares of the World; and with this precious Insinuation he deceives most, and brings them to the very Brink of Eternity, e'er they can see the Danger; and then as it is too late to retreat. A Death-Bed Repentance is but a very doubtful Assurance, for that which is forced and extorted from us in Fears and Agonies, cannot in our own impartial Opinions be thought to be found acceptable with God, and gain us the Glories of Heaven, for when we have spun our whole Course of Life, in sinning and rebelling against thee, and are not capable of sinning any longer; such a Repentance is involuntary, not of Love but Fear and Distraction, because we are about to be ingulfed in a vast Eternity of Misery, we would willingly escape in this last Extremity, though all our Life long we have been running headlong into it.

BUT to urge this a little further, which of us can have any Assurance (should it be granted a Death-Bed Repentance might atone for our Sins, and appease the Wrath of infinite Majesty, infinitely offended by our long Course of sinning against him) whether we shall at that time have such a Power given us as to repent, but that on the contrary, by a habitual Custom of sinning, our Hearts may be so hardened, as not to

be capable of Repentance, which without the strong Motions of his Holy Spirit, can no Ways be expected; and we have all the Reason in the World to believe, that such a Habit and Custom of sinning will provoke God, and that justly, to take away from us the Will and Power to repent at such a time, and suffer habitual Vice to grow too strong for us in such a weak Condition; when Satan will be most busied in using his utmost Temptations to hinder the Motions of any good Thoughts that might arise in us at such an Hour, as too many have sadly experienc'd, who have with Sighs and Groans expressed their Hearts were so hardened that they could not pray nor lift them up towards God, all seeming dark and cloudy round them, and not one single Beam of Comfort darting into their Souls; then in vain it was they wished they had spent their precious Time to better Purposes. Consider this all you that have Health and Strength, and as yet, through God's Grace and Mercy, time gives Opportunity to run the Race, at which is the Crown of Glory, up then and run quickly, run with Earnestness, neither loiter nor sleep by the Way, lest in delay, the Sleep of Death overtake you e'er you reach the Mark of your high Calling, and so when

at last you awake, you awake to Misery
for ever.

*The State of a departing Soul under the
Agonies of Death, as it refers either
to their being miserable, or happy af-
ter this Life.*

AS a Man dies, so shall he be found in
Judgment, he that has lived to die in a
wicked State, shall be miserable, and he
that has lived to die well, shall be happy,
both of them in their several Stations, to
Eternity; and of the dying of these I
shall give brief, but very moving Circum-
stances, worthy to be heeded of all Chri-
stians.

PASSING over the Troubles and
Pains that attend a sick and dying Man, I
come nearer, and first to him, who spend-
ing his Life wickedly, is now on the
 brink of the Grave. If this Man has any
 sense of what he is undergoing and to suf-
fer, or what he may expect to be his Por-
tion in the other World; then we may ima-
gine the Terror of his abused Fancies,
how they see affrighting Shapes; and be-
cause they fear them, they feel the Gripes
of Infernal Spirits, urging the unwilling
Soul,

Soul from the kind and close Embraces of the Body, calling to the Grave, and hastening him to Judgment, exhibiting large Bills of uncanceled Crimes, and awakening the amazed Conscience, that Sin long had lulled asleep, breaking all his hope in Pieces, and making Faith useless and terrible, because his Malice was great against his Redeemer, and his Charity nothing availing, then shall he look for some to have pity on him, but there is no Man dares be his Pledge, no Man can redeem his Soul, which now feels what it once it feared, not then the Trembling and the Sorrow, the Memory of past Sin and the fear of future Pains, the Sense of an angry God, and the Presence of infernal Spirits, consigning him to the eternal Company of all the damned and accursed Spirits in the Regions of Woe and endless Lamentation; then he wants an Angel for his Guide, and the Holy Spirit he has often grieved for his Comforter, a good Conscience for his Testimony, and Christ for his Advocate, and so he dies, and is left in Prisons of the Earth or Air, in secret and undiscerned Regions, to weep and tremble, and infinitely to fear the coming of the great and terrible Day of Judgment, at which time he shall be brought

for

aces of death to change his Condition into a far
better, where he shall for ever feel more
than we can believe; or Tongue can utter;
even woe to those that follow the Ways of
Sin for the Reward of Unrighteousness.
But with a good Man, who has lived
well to die well, it is far otherwise; one
that hath lived innocently, or made Joy in
heaven at his timely and effectual Repen-
tance, on whose behalf the holy Jesus hath
interceded prosperously, and for whose
interest the holy Spirit makes Interpellati-
ons with Groans and Sighs unutterable, and
whose Defence the good Angels drive a-
gainst the evil Spirits that would trouble and
disturb him on his Death-Bed, so that his
mind being quiet, and calm as a Hal-
cyon Sea, his Joy apparently breaks forth
through the Cloud of Sickness, and his
conscience stands justifying him, con-
fessing the Glory of God, owning so much
integrity that it can assuredly hope for
pardon, and obtain it; and when the
Creak of Death sets it free from the Body,
and the Soul goes forth, rejoicing, first into Li-
berty, and then into Glory; then it is an
infinite Refreshment to him to remember
the Comforts of the good Life he has
had on Earth, which has paved his Way to
heaven, procuring him a Portion and In-
heritance in his blessed Redeemer, entering

to take Possession, when the veil of this Life is rent, and the Prison Doors set open at the Presence of the Angel of God.

T H U S the Soul goes forth full of Hope, sometimes with Evidence, but always with Certainty in the thing, and instantly it passes into the Throngs of Spirits where Angels meet it, singing Triumphs and the Devils approach with malicious and vile Purposes, as desirous to lead it away with them into their Houses of Wailing and Sorrow ; there the Soul sees things it never saw, and hears Voices it never before heard there the Devils charge it with many Sins and the good Angels remember that themselves rejoiced when they were repented of and blotted out, and so bear the just Soul forward, because the Lord hath answered for it ; then the infernal Spirits rage and gnash their Teeth ; they see the Soul chaste and pure, and are ashamed they see it penitent and despair ; so the Soul passeth on and rejoiceth, scorning its implacable Enemies, and triumphing over them, being securely carried into the Bosom of the Lord where it shall rest till its Crowns are finished and its glorious Mansion prepared, and there it shall sing and feast, and rejoice and worship for ever and ever. And thus shall be done to the Man that feareth the Lord.

CON

CONSIDERATIONS ON ETERNITY.

ETERNITY, *how it is termed, and its boundless Infinitude, with some Similies moving us so to live, as to enjoy a blessed Eternity.*

ETERNITY, though it consists but of Four Syllables, is a Word in Signification of the largest Extent imaginable, it is that which cannot be comprehended by Angels or Men; nothing but God himself is capable of comprehending it; it is a thing without Beginning or End, and therefore usually called *from all Eternity to all Eternity*, and is branched into two Parts, *viz.* An Eternity of Happiness or Misery, for though this Life, and the Joys or Sorrows of it are measured out by a short space of Time; that which is to come, pass-

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es beyond all Time, for in it Time is swallowed up in *Eternity*, as if it had never had a Being.

W H E N at any time we make mention of *Eternity*, we speak always in the least, but are never capable of speaking too much of it, yet happy is he who has it always in his Mind to good Purposes, though whatsoever is said or imagined comes very short of it, for there is no Comparison of any thing we can frame or imagine to be compared with it; for take from it whatever you will, to the highest Number, it is still the same, it neither encreases by Addition, nor diminishes by Subtraction; could we subtract from it so many Years as there are Sands or Drops of Water in the Sea, they would nothing diminish it; though they are far above numbering, and if as many Years were added to it, they would signifie nothing, for it would be still the same, for it is without Number, and without End, and still remains *Eternity*. If he who is in a miserable *Eternity* or damned State should every Year weep a Tear till they equalled the Waters of the Ocean; alas! it would be no Comparison to *Eternity*, though so many Millions of Years not to be numbred passed for *Eternity* would then be a Beginning as
much

much as at first, and the Miseries of those that are so unhappy as to be under the Wrath of an eternal God, in the Dungeons of Woe and Sorrow, be as far from ending as they were when they first resigned their Mortal Breath, they shall still be burning in the everlasting Lake, where the Worm never dieth, nor the Fire is not quenched, when Ten thousand Millions of Millions of Years are past, they shall be still irreversibly in the same State continually, unutterably and eternally, from one Million of Years to another for ever and ever.

ETERNITY is compared to a round Orb, that cannot be said to have any End, to a Serpent that involves it self in it self, always circling, and never coming to a Period. If a little Bird should attempt to empty the Sea, by every Day carrying away a drop of Water in her Bill, it would be as vain a Task as for any to think to have an End of eternal Miseries, that by their Carelessness and Negligence in this Life, plunge themselves into them; and indeed, a blessed *Eternity* would be attended with Fears and Sorrows, if when the Joys and Pleasures of Heaven are once tasted, the blessed Souls should be possessed of a Thought that they would ever have End, it

it would imbitter their Sweets, and disturb their happy Rests, make them uneasie and unquiet in the Land of all Blessedness, and start at the Thoughts of losing what they have toiled and earnestly laboured for ; but this shall not be, for as long as God is God, so long shall they be happy, and the other miserable, the one shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, and the other be perpetually in the Regions of Darknes and Horror.

BUT this seems wonderful and strange to human Understanding; and it does so, because our Imagination cannot conceive it, it cannot reach to what is so far removed from it, nor penetrate into that which is infinite, for that is impenetrable, and this is the Reason our weak Understanding is so hardly drawn to the Considerations of *Eternity*, because it blusheth in a sort, and is ashamed, or else for Indignation cannot endure to tire it self in the search of that which cannot be found out ; but let us remove this foolish and shamefac'd Modesty, and let us force our Understanding to the due and serious Contemplation of *Eternity*, and let it be our daily Exercise still to be meditating upon the Similitudes that may in some sort shadow it out and present it to us, and so shall we never do a

mis

is, say we what we can, think we what we will.

IMAGINE then so many Millions of Millions of Years as it is possible for the Mind of Man to conceive, we shall still come short of the Measure and Length of *Eternity*, the Years of *Eternity* are far more, infinitely more; this is certain, and without all Controversie. *Simonides* being demanded by *Hiero* King of *Sicily*, what he demanded a Day to Consider, and after that many others, and the further he searched into this unfathom'd Depth and profound Mystery, the more he found himself at a Loss, his Reason and Understanding more baffled and put to the foil. So is it with those that will foolishly go about to comprehend the Bounds and Limits of *Eternity*, which is without Limit or End; but when we consider it, we ought so to consider, that it may turn to our Good in living well, seeing upon a short time here allowed us to spend, the Happiness or Misery of it depends. *Boetius*, undertaking to describe *Eternity*, tells us it is altogether, and at once the entire and perfect Possession of a Life that shall never have End; and *Plato* concerning God, says, *What he is I know, what he is not that I know*; and *S. Augustine* discoursing of Heaven in one of his Sermons,

Sermons. says, We may more easily find what is not there, than what is, for assuredly there is neither Grief nor Sorrow, nor Penury nor Defect; no Disease nor Death, nor any Evil; and so may we say of *Eternity*, for whatsoever in this Life we either see with our Eyes, or let in by our outward Sense, that is not eternal; for *the Things that are seen, saith S. Paul, are Temporal, but the Things which are not seen are Eternal.*

HENCE we may truly say, that Riches, Honour, and all the visible Things of this Life are Transitory, nothing Eternal; no one can point at any thing that shall not perish and come to an End, though the foolish are wont to inscribe on Monuments and Pyramids, viz. in eternal Memory of such a one, or such a thing; and some in Trouble and Pain complain, it is without End. But alas! these *Eternities* are but trifling and momentary to what is really *Eternity*, and a Man may comprehend them in a few Words; but that which is really so we must come infinitely short of understanding it; for as *S. Augustine* says of *Eternity*, thou sayest whatsoever thou wilt, but it is because thou canst not say all, say then what thou wilt, that still thou mayest have something to think which thou canst

find say ; and *Trismegistus* tells us, the Soul
 afflu Man is the Horizon of Time, and E-
 row ity, for it is immortal, it is a Partaker
 e not Eternity ; and for as much as it is infused
 e say God into the Body, it is a Partaker of
 fe we ne, adding, that God is an intellectual
 r out ere, whose Center is every where, and
 for the cumference no where, because his
 aporal jesty and Immensity are terminated no
 Eter ere ; and so may it be said of Eternity.

Rich w the Considerations of ETERNITY
 ings ought to oblige us to a speedy Repen-
 eternal tance, and the Amendment of our
 all no Lives, that so we may escape being
 gh the eternally miserable.

find many Passages in holy Writ which
 ify, that good Men made it their chief
 out trine's to meditate on Eternity ; we find
 ly Ere y *David* complaining of the breaking his
 henit, when he says his Eyes have prevented
 aily so Night Watcher, Psal. 119. 148. and a-
 unde o, thou boldest mine Eyes waking, I am so
 of bled that I cannot speak, Psal. 77. 4. and
 u wil at was all this for, why in Psal. 77. 5.
 all, sa plainly tells us, viz. I have considered the
 maye s of old, and the Years of ancient Times,
 u can the Years of Eternity I have had in my
 no Mind

Mind. This was the weighty Consideration that broke his Rest, viz. when he compared the Years that were past with the Years that were to come, and with *Eternity*. This Consideration made him always on his Guard, and earnest in Prayer to God that his Lot might fall in a fair Land, that he might have his Redeemer for his Inheritance in a blessed Eternity, and when he thought on so fair a Portion he rejoiced yet not without Caution and Fear, for he says, *I call to Remembrance my Song in the Night, I commune with my own Heart, and my Spirit made diligent Search; and yet for all this, sometimes he found Clouds and dark Mists before the Eyes of his Soul* which makes him cry out in a trembling manner, viz. *Will the Lord cast off his Mercy clean gone for ever? See in this he fears and trembles exceedingly at the Considerations of Eternity, how even a Man, appointed by God himself, and said to be after his own Heart, is afraid of God's Judgments, lest his Sins should find him under the Weight of eternal Punishment; and a little after, we find him seriously promising, not to delay or put off his Repentance, not to run any further Hazard of losing a blessed Eternity, viz.*

Considered this in my Infirmary, but now I will remember, &c. That is, now I will begin to consider my Ways aright, and not put off my Repentance a Moment longer, least Death cut a Period to the short time I have to live here, and my entrance upon and continuance in *Eternity* be endless Misery.

How then ought every one of us sinful creatures to be every Day, nay every Hour to be thinking and meditating in *Eternity*, to stop us in the career of sinning, and make us set about a speedy and sincere Repentance? Let every one consider with himself, if he be able or not to dwell with the everlasting Burnings, to hold an Eternal State in the unquenchable Flames of Hell; but seeing none would willingly abide this, then it is highly necessary, seeing all must enter upon *Eternity*, to use all manner of Endeavours, by Prayer, Fasting, Humiliation, Acts of Love, Charity, and all the Holy Duties enjoined by Religion to escape it, that such an *Eternity* may be all to our Lot, as may far exceed in Pleasures as it does in Space, all the Glories of this World; if those of all Ages were united in one, the very Thoughts of which, with any Assurance, will give us an earnest Hope of Heaven, whilst on Earth. This was the Hope and Confidence of all the Saints, Martyrs

Martyrs and Confessors; this made them despise Ignominy, Reproach, Imprisonments, Tortures and Death, in its most cruel and affrighting Shapes, running into the Flames, and not accepting Deliverance on the wicked Terms their Enemies proposed them. This Hope gives all good Men Courage, Constancy and Patience, whilst the Years of a blessed *Eternity* fill their Mind, all this Life seems but a moment of Trouble and Sorrow to them; neither Hunger, Thirst, Nakedness, Tribulation can change or alter their resolution in travelling through the dangerous Wilderness of this temporary World, to Heavenly *Canaan*, the new *Jerusalem* built without Hands, eternally in the highest Heavens

TO conclude, Have always *Eternity* before your Eyes, and you will never amiss.

A
TREATISE
OF THE
Nature and Immortality
OF THE
SOUL of MAN;
AND

First, Of its Existence, Operation,
and being a Substance, whilst in
the Body, and encumbered with
Flesh, &c.

Of the Existence of the Soul, &c.

THE Distinction God has made
between Man and other Creatures,
consists in the former being enno-
bled with a rational Soul, enabling him to
discern Things aright, and rendering him
capable of an incorruptible Mortality, for

as the Soul of a Beast goes downward to the Earth, as earthly, so the Soul of Man, even whilst imprisoned in its clayey Mansion, struggles and presses upwards towards Heaven, as its native Place, where it reaches at with longing Desires, and uneasie in its Confinement, as desirous to turn to God that gave it, unless clogged and polluted with gross and earthly Sins, that weigh it down, and hinder its active Wings from soaring to its proper Region which shows her to be of an immortal Race not fastly linked to time, but to Eternity with which she only consists. The Soul in Man is the true Discerner of Good and Evil, Truth and Falshood, and in her own Nature relishes nothing but what savours of Heavenly and Divine, she is not fed with these gross Elements, not nourished with Things that go into the Body, but with Angels Food, the hidden *Manna*, the Graces and Spiritual Motions of divine and essential Blessings, starting and sickning at what is disagreeable to her Nature, whilst she holds her Innocency and Purity, unmixed with carnal Desires, unlawful Lusts and such other Incumberances thrown upon her by the inordinate Inroachments of the Flesh, otherwise God is only the Soul's Centre and Circumference, and is of

rd of an immaterial Substance, distinct from
of the visible Body, and of this and its Im-
laye mortality ! thus consider.

It is granted by the Wise and Learned
men. That since things are destroyed on-
and by their Contraries, that thing which
to th no Contrary, is not subject to De-
d an uction or Dissolution, (which Principle
th Reason and Experience do every where
active confirm) but a human Soul is not subject
egion Contrariety, therefore such a one can-
Race t be annihilated; the Truth of the As-
termini mption may be known Two Ways ;
e Soul ft, Because all the Contrarieties that are
od an and within our Cognizance, do arise out
er ow the Primary Opposition of Rarity and
favour nsity, from which the Soul being abso-
ed wi ely free, is so from all which groweth
d-wi of that Root ; and Secondly, We may
ut wi ure our Souls can receive no Harm from
he Gra n rariety, since all Contraries are so far
ne an m hurting her, as contrariwise, the one
knigh peth her in the Contemplation of the
, whil er; and as for Contradietion in Thoughts,
ty, uich at different Times our Soul is capa-
ul Lust of admitting, Experience teaches us,
own u such Thoughts are changed in her,
ments out any Prejudice to her Substance,
he Soul y being Accidents , and having their
is of ntrariety between themselves in her,

but no Opposition at all to her, which is only the Contrariety that may have Power to harm her; and therefore, whatsoever of such contrary Thoughts be in the Soul of Man, pertaineth no more to her Substance than it doth to the Substance of a Body, whether it be here or there, on the Right hand, or on the Left; and this may suffice to shew the Soul's Immortality, which importeth no more than to shew, that the Cause of other Things mortally do not reach her.

BY what has been said, we find that Truth is the natural Perfection of the Soul of Man, and that she cannot be assured of Truth otherwise than naturally, by Evidence; and therefore it is manifest, that Evidence of Truth is the full complete Perfection at which the Soul doth aim; so, that the Soul of Man is capable of an absolute Infinitude of Truth or Evidence; and to these Two I shall add one thing more, past all Contradiction; and therefore, not needing Evidence, *viz.* That in a Man or Woman the Soul is a far nobler and perfecter Part than the Body; and therefore, by the Rules of Nature and Wisdom, the Body was made for the Soul and not the Soul finally for the Body.

Some Conjectures what the Soul of Man is, and how it actuates after it is departed out of the Body, shewing it to be Eternal; with Motives drawn from hence to Repentance and a good Life.

HAVING thus far proceeded to prove the Immortality of the Soul, and that she is of an excellent Nature, acting of her self, without the Help of any visible Motor, whenever she is so pleased to do. We come now further to consider, as a further Proof, whether in this Life she arrives at the End she was ordained for or not. If we do not, as it is an undoubted Truth, when the Body was only made as a Passage, by which the Soul is carried to that State wherein she is to attain unto the End for which her Nature was framed and fitted; and First, We may perceive, without much serious Enquiry, that the great Skill and Artifice of Nature never faileth of compassing her End, even in her meanest Works; and therefore it is a Contradiction to conclude she would break her Course, in the meanest whereof Man is the Head and Chief, as far as this visible World can com-

monstrate to us. Now what the End is to which the Soul of Man do's aim, is evident; seeing the Perfection of every thing is the End for which it is made; the Perfection then of the Soul being Evidence, and she being capable of infinite Evidence, it cannot consist with Reason, that in this Life she can compass it; but the attaining of her highest Perfection, is reserved for a future State, when she enters upon Eternity, which consequently shews her to be Immortal; but since her Actings in another State are beyond the reach of short-sighted Reason, the better to set it to the Light, as much as may be, I will now frame some Idea or Conceit of a Soul separated from the Body.

W-E find that an Art or Science is adherent to a Party skilled therein, when he is not practising of it, as well as when he is; and the Soul, which is a Being of it self, must of it self understand whatever it has attained, and still be reaching higher Knowledge, when disincumbered from the Body, as more nobly subsisting without the Clog of gross Elements, for then there can be no Accidents, no Parts, no Additions or Appendancies, nothing that sticks to it that is not it, but whatsoever is without it, is Soul, and the Soul is all that is without

in her, so that all that is of her, and all that belongeth to her, is nothing but one simple Substance. In fine, Substance it is, and Nothing if it were not a Substance, all that is in it being joined and fastened into it by the very Nature of Being, which maketh Substance, which is the substantial Conceit of a human Soul, stript of her Body.

THIS Soul then thus separate, returns to God the Author of her Being, and as she has done well or ill in the Body, so as she out lives it, her Joy or Punishment first begins, and continues till united with the Body at the Last Day, never more to separate; and in that second Union all things are more perfect and evident; this Soul is of a Price more valuable than all the Things this World can afford, for our Blessed Saviour comparing it, says, *What shall it profit a Man if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul!* Why, truly the Gain is nothing, but the Loss is infinite, for the Soul is invaluablely precious, and out-lives the World, and all its Glories, even to all Eternity, and if it loses it self for perishing Things, it will be swallowed up in the Gulf of endless Misery, where nothing will be able to comfort it. O then consider, seeing it is Immortal and must never die,

or be dissolved to lay up Treasure for it in Heaven, that parting from the Body, it may have Rest, and again, uniting with it Eternal Rest.

*A Serious Meditation on the Joys
of Heaven.*

O MY Soul! since thou art so precious in the Sight of God and the holy Angels, well mayest thou conclude thy self a Native of Heaven, which should make thee despise all the lower World, and account its Glories as Dross and Dung, well considering, that here thou hast no tarrying City, but thy proper Dwelling should be above in the bright Mansions not made with Hands, but founded eternally in the highest Heavens. Labour then with enflamed Love to soar aloft from this troublesome and tempestuous tossing Ocean, and take to thy self the Wings of Faith and Hope, and fly away to be at Rest, saying with Holy David, *O how amiable are thy Dwellings, thou Lord of Hosts!* I long and pant to enter into thy Courts, there thou shalt not only have God himself, who is the Fountain of all Blessings, but the whole Company of Saints and Angels, the Choir of blessed Spirits, antheming his Throne

with

with Hosanna's and Hallelujahs, saying,
*Blessing and Honour, and Glory, and Power be
 unto him that sitteth on the Throne; and unto
 the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever; and
 here, as they rejoiced at thy Conversion,
 they shall triumph at thy Coronation. Then
 shall thy Joy be full, thy Tears shall be wi-
 ped away, and thy Sorrow, be remembred
 no more; there shalt thou be covered
 with the shining Robe of Christ's Righte-
 ousness, and for thy Credit and Honour it
 shall be pronounced in the blessed Assem-
 bly, *Well done thou good and faithful Servant,*
&c. Thy Sins shall then be cast into per-
 petual Oblivion, but thy good Deeds done
 on Earth shall be in perpetual Remem-
 brance written fair in Characters of Gold,
 and smell as a sweet Sacrifice in the No-
 strils of the Almighty, who will lead thee,
 and feed thee by the Fountains and Rivers
 of Life, where thou shalt rest in Safety
 for ever and ever. O my Soul, consider
 these Things, whilst it is to Day, and be-
 wise to eternal Ages. *Amen.**

*A melancholy Reflection on the Torment
of Hell, by way of Meditation.*

O MY Soul! prepare with Trembling and a godly Fear to take a view of the Scene of Horror and amazing Woe, into which obstinate, unthinking and unadvised Wretches have plunged themselves, and are lost in endless Misery. O stand thou on the Brink of Eternity, and thence cast thy amazed Eyes on the flaming Gulph, whose Billows roll in tempestuous Fire, in Deluges and Torrents of burning liquid Brimstone unquenchable to all Eternity, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of Teeth, and no Light but to see their Miseries eternal, Cursings and Blasphemings through ceaseless Anguish and Pain, where the Company consists of ugly upbraiding Devils and damned Spirits, who wish to die, or be annihilated; but Death flies from them, and their Wishes must remain unanswered for endless Millions of Ages, and then be as far from ending as when they began, no Beam of Comfort shall shine upon them, nor the least hope of a Mitigation or Reprieve shall enter there; but all Hopes are banished, as they are banished from

from God and his Presence for evermore,
which Sense of Loss is not the least Part of
their Pain and Anguish, and may be reck-
oned the chiefest, seeing at a little Cost and
labour in good Deeds, and a penitent de-
out Life, they might have had endless Joy
and immortal Glory, instead of eternal
Terror and Pain. O my Soul, to avoid
thy coming to this Place of Torment, put
not off thy Repentance, but begin it in-
stantly, for who knows what a Day may
bring forth, of good Well spent, or of E-
vil if neglected and trifled away; there-
fore, seeing God is infinitely good in his
nature, not only comprehending but ex-
ceeding the Perfections of all Things, close
with his Mercies betimes, lest his Justice
overtake thee in thy Sin, and thou come to
this Place of Torment.

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MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
UPON THE
Seven AGES of MAN'S LIFE.

The First AGE.
From Infancy to Ten Years.



*Eccles. xi. 10. Childhood and Youth are Vanities.
The New born Infant in the Cradle lies,
And when it sleeps not, fills our Ears with Cries.*

S
F E.
being grown big with foolish Sports and Play,
the first Ten Years of Life are thrown away;
he enjoys, till these Ten Years are o'er,
that Innocence which he must boast no more.

rs.
This Emblem, which represents the first
Stage of Man's Life, shews us the two-
fold State thereof, viz. Infancy, as ly-
ing in the Cradle; and Childhood, as
playing with a Hobby-Horse: I shall
consider each of these distinctly.

First, *As to Infancy*: No sooner are we
come out of those Attiring Rooms, or
winding Chambers of Nature, in which
we are cloathed with Flesh, I mean the
dark Recesses of our Mother's Womb, in
which we have liv'd, for some time, but a
vegetative kind of Life; but as soon as our
eyes behold the Light, we give the first
notice that we are alive, by our foreboding
cries; as if the New-born Infant, in its
first dawn of Life, foresaw the Miseries
that did attend it; and knew already it
came through a hard Passage into a harder
World: For though it scarcely breathes a
Life that's only Animal, yet the poor,
helpless, loathsome Condition in which it
comes into the World, would almost make
us think its Tears were Rational, there is

so just a Reason for 'em : For certainly, of
 all the Creatures in the World, there's none
 so loathsome in its first Appearance, as a
 New-born Infant. Hence 'tis the Divine
 Spirit, by the Prophet, sets out the truly
 loathsome and miserable State of Man, be-
 fore Conyerfion, by that of a New-born
 Babe at its first Birth; Ezek. xvi. 4, 5, 6
*As for thy Natiuity, in the Day thou wast
 born, thy Navel was not cut, neither wast thou
 washed in Water to supple thee; thou wast not
 salted at all, nor swaddled at all. No Eye
 pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have
 Compassion upon thee, but thou wast cast out
 the open Field, to the loathing of thy Person,
 the Day that thou wast born. And when I pa-
 sed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thy own
 Blood, I said unto thee — Live. This there-
 fore is the first Estate of every Infant that
 cometh into the World; 'tis Naked, Poor
 and Helpless, and polluted in its own Blood
 in which, without the Assistance of some
 charitable Hand, it must immediately peri-
 ish, being unable to contribute the least
 Iota to its own Assistance. Methinks
 'wou'd some of those fine Ladies that are
 dress'd up in all those gaudy Plumes that
 Art or Nature can afford, and that none
 think the Ground is hardly good enough
 for them to tread upon; would some
 the*

these, I say, but cast their Eyes upon a
 New-born Infant, just taken reaking
 from its Mother's Womb, and then reflect
 that they were once in the self same Condi-
 tion, as filthy and polluted altogether, and
 being unable too, to help themselves, it could
 not but a little humble 'em, and make 'em
 lower their Toppings, and think more
 meanly of themselves than now they do;
 and not despise the Poor, tho' cloath'd in
 Rags, seeing their own first Garments were
 far worse, being at their Birth cover'd with
 nothing but Pollution, and so expos'd unto
 their View that first beheld 'em. This
 you'd be likewise a fit Sight for those
 proud Beaus, who, were their Nails but
 united to their Hair, would represent *Nebu-
 badnezzar*, in their *Form*, as well as *Pride*,
 when he was turn'd to Grass; who now
 so bedaub'd with Essences, and with
 sweet Powder, as makes 'em stink worse
 than a Polecat: These hardly can believe
 they ever were reduc'd to such a State of
 loathsomeness and Imbecility. And yet;
 proud as now they are, this was their
 Condition once: And were their
 eyes but open, they might now see them-
 selves much worse; for though these help-
 less Infants have the Seeds of Sin, yet as to
 actual Commission of it, they are inno-
 cent;

cent; their Pollution being Natural and not Moral; whereas the others are defiled with actual Sins and Transgressions, wherein there is a real and a moral Turpitude; which is far worse than any natural Pollution.

But 'tis not only this Pollution of our Births that renders the Infancy of Man so vain and miserable, but also the wretched Imbecility of an Infant-state, is truly deplorable; no other Creature is so helpless as Man is, in his Infancy, nor expos'd to so many Dangers; an Infant not being capable of doing the least thing for it self, nor having any means to express its Wants, besides its Cries and Tears, but must be beholden to another Hand for every thing it has need of; subject to more Diseases than any other State of Mankind, which very often do prove mortal too; so that two Thirds of the *Bills of Mortality* do oft consist of Infants: The *Thrush*, the *Teeth*, *Convulsions* and several other Distempers, carrying them off in the first Month; as if they came into the World only to shew themselves and so go out again. And if they happen to escape those killing Distempers, yet they pass away their Time in Sleep, the Image of Death, to which Infancy is more inclin'd than any other Age of Man; which the Physicians tell us is occasion'd through the

and good Digestion of that mild milky Substance, filed from whence there ascendeth into the Head therein the soundest and most pure Exhalations, which and therefore are their Sleeps, for the most part, without any the least Painfulness or Molestation; whereas, on the contrary, we see that those whose Stomachs are surcharged, do always sleep the most unquietly day. And this sleeping part of Infancy, vain as it is, is yet the most easie, both for themselves and those whose Business it is to tend upon them, for otherwise they are usually noisy; And how unpleasant is it to hear a new-born Infant incessantly cry out, and yet none know for what, nor how to help it? For it has many times it so falls out, that though the Mother or Nurse do's every thing she can to quiet it, yet nothing will effect it; even the Breast it self is sometimes offer'd it in vain, to make it cease from crying. And since all Infants generally enter crying into the World, some have been curious to enquire into the Reasons of it; and there are many that attribute their Crying to a Natural Foreboding or Divining, and as it were, foretelling of Calamities to come; or as if it Imagin'd some Discerning of that miserable World into which it is but newly enter'd: which these alledge, the Souls of Infants are perfect at their Birth, for Souls admit no Growth,

Growth: and therefore 'tis for want of bodily Organs that they can't exert their Faculties: And their divining Souls perceiving how the World is like to treat 'em shew their Dislike, by Crying, at their first Entrance into it. But others think their Crying rather do's arise from that quick Sense of Feeling, which they have immediately upon their coming out of that close warm Chamber of their Mother's Womb where not the least breath of Air cou'd come at 'em: and so being now newly come into the Air, the least Degree of it at first is grievous to 'em: And probably enough it is that the Compression of their poor tender Bodies, in that strait Passage through which they came into the World, may cause the New-born Infant to cry out, as having then a vivid Sense thereof, and being, as it were, a Partner of its Mother's Pains so that its Entrance, as well as its *Exit*, is attended both with Pain and Sorrow. And thus it seems we no sooner begin to Live, but we begin to be Miserable; our whole Life being but a vain and wearisome Pilgrimage towards the Grave.

But though this State of Infancy be helpless, and deplorable, attended with so much Trouble and Sorrow, and that we are usher'd into the World with no other Musick than that of Cries and Lamentations

ions, yet is it the most innocent Part of
 our Lives; in this Age we are without all
 appearance of Evil, and we neither do,
 nor think amiss: Eat and drink only at Na-
 ture's Call, and when that's satisfy'd, we
 are contented; we are incapable of sinister
 Designs, and do in all our Actions express a
 perfect Innocence, which in the Emblem
 is intimated by the Lamb. It was on the Ac-
 count of the Innocency of this Age, that
 our Blessed Saviour tells us, *That whosoever*
shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as
a little Child, should in no wise enter therein;
 and therefore he both blessed them, and
 charg'd his Disciples to suffer such to come
 to him; adding this as a Reason, *For of such*
is the Kingdom of God. But we have hi-
 therto been speaking but of the first part of
 this First Age of Man, to wit, *Infancy*;
 which, according to the Division made by
 the Ancients, as I have shew'd in the Intro-
 duction, continues for the first Five Years;
 which we have had such a deplorable
 prospect of Vanity and Misery, that there's
 no Man in his Wits that would choose to
 be always in such a Condition.

We will now take a short Survey of the
 state of Childhood, which is but a small
 remove from that of Infancy; and that
 which increases the Misery of it is, that it
 is

is more vain than that: For before we well got out of our Mother's Lap, we take our selves to Play; and therein are vain, as to doat on those foolish and ridiculous Toys, which we our selves quickly come asham'd of; and in this Age contend as eagerly for Rattles and Hobby-Horses, afterwards we do for more substantial Vanities. How much is it to be bewail'd, that we should thus foolishly trifle away the most Innocent part of our Lives, in wearying our selves for very Vapidity? Is it not a matter of Lamentation, that the longer we live, the more we should corrupt our selves and grow more vain in our Imagination, placing our Delight so early in things that are without any real Worth, and that can bring us no sort of Profit? And yet this is the natural bent of all our Minds, unless God pleases, by an especial Work of Grace, to draw our Hearts another Way. Some have been Converted even in the early Age, and call'd in the First Hour, others have been after in the Eleventh. which Mr. *Herbert Palmer* was one, who at Four or Five Years of Age neglected Play, and desir'd to hear something of God: Mr. *Caleb Vernon* was also another, who at Four Years of Age could read the Bible distinctly, and at Six became well known

following therein, and had a great regard
to it; and at Ten Years of Age (the
Year of the first Age of Man, accor-
ding to the foregoing Division) he writ a
Christian-like Letter to a Friend of
his, in which there were the following Pas-
sages; which I insert, that it may provoke
other young Ones to a happy both Emula-
tion and Imitation. *I desire that my Soul may
be fill'd with the Love of God, being ready for
the Day of his coming to judge the World in
righteousness, where the Kings of the Earth
shall tremble, and the Rulers shall be astonish'd
at the brightness of his coming, when he shall
come with his holy Angels in Power and Glory,
to judge the Earth in the Valley of Jehosha-
phat. O that my Soul was fit for his coming,
that I may be like a flourishing Flower in the
Garden of Eden, prepar'd for the Lord Christ.
For this is a trying Day, the Lord is searching Je-
rusalem with Candles, to find out Outside Pro-
fessors, who do make clean the outside of the
Cup and Platter, when their hearts are full of
filth. O that we might be comforting one ano-
ther with his coming, putting on the Breast-Plate
of Faith, and laying aside the Traditions of
Men. O how near is his coming! even at the
door: therefore we should be Watching, for we
know not what hour he will come. — So far
the Letter.*

I will add another Example or two, Children Converted in this First Age Man's Life, that, if possible, I may provoke such to seek after God betimes.

A Child of one Mr. *Mixey* of *Lin* when it was but two Years old, would to kneel down often, and with his Eyes and Hands lifted up toward Heaven, would be very serious in Prayer, and as it grew older, would be often Praying by it self, and ask several Questions of its Mother about Spiritual Things, much beyond its Age. At Five Years old, in the middle of his Sports, as he was whipping a Top, on a sudden cast away all, and went to his Mother, saying to her with much Joy, *Mother, I must go to Heaven, will you go with me?* asking her the same Question the second time: Upon which his Mother answered, *Yes, dear Child, when God shall please, but how dost thou know thou shalt go to Heaven?* The little one answer'd, *God hath told me I must go to Heaven; for I love God, and God loves me.* After which, he never played any more, but in about Three Weeks or a Month sickned and dy'd. uttering many gracious Words before his Death.

Another Child of about six Years of Age being bid by his Mother to go forth to play met with some other Children that were a

two, year and be debauch'd (and such indeed
 Age re are too many) and so coming home
 may p in very solitary, his Mother askt him,
 es. y be did not go to Play? The Child an-
 of Li er'd very soberly, *I have no body to Play*
 would b but such as will swear, and they can't be
 his E's Children: To which his Mother ask-
 e, wo Why not? No Mother, said he, though I
 it gr e learn'd but a little way in my Book, yet I
 y it f e learn'd, that God will not Pardon such
 Mo as Swearing, and taking his Name in
 yond n. To which the Mother answering,
 midl Child, *I hope God will pardon them; or else*
 Top, d help thy Father, and God help us all: To
 ent to ich the Child reply'd, *With great Repen-*
 uch J ce, God can forgive, for his Mercies are
 u go at; but good Mother, let us forbear that
 n-the ich is Evil. These Words, and others
 other the like Nature, from this young Saint;
 all ple re made, through the Blessing of God,
 Heav means of his Mother's Conversion, as
 old m her self afterwards declar'd.

and These few Examples shew, that some
 r pla ve been call'd, by God's Grace, even in
 eks o ir Infancy and Childhood. Thus Je-
 ng n iah was sanctified from the Womb, and
 was John Baptist also; and King Josiah's
 s of A art was tender towards God when he
 a to P s but Eight Years old. But of these
 at wo re are but few; in respect of those o-
 Sw thers

thers that walk in the broad Ways that lead to Destruction. But let little Children know, that if they do wickedly when they are young, they cannot avoid Destruction: A terrible Instance of the truth of this is that of the little Children who came and abused the Prophet *Elisha*, saying, *up, thou Bald-head, Go up, thou Bald-head*; upon which the Prophet turn'd back, and look'd on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord; and there came forth two she-Bears out of the Wood, and tare forty and two Children of them: Therefore little Children ought to beware, for God will not be mocked, nor will he suffer his Prophets to be mocked by them.

This last Instance sufficiently shews how soon the Seeds of Sin will ripen; for the Text tells us not only that they were *Children*, but also that they were *Little Children* who made it their Sport to mock and jest at God's Prophet. How miserable then is this Childish Age of Man, wherein we have no sooner learn'd to speak, but we employ our Tongue in the blaspheming of his Holy Name that gave it us; and by making of a mock at Sin, verifie our selves to be those Fools spoken of by *Solomon*, who not only tells us, that *Fools make a mock at sin*, Prov. 14. 9. but also that *it is a sport to Fools to do mischief*, Prov. 16. 23.

To give you then the full Sum of this
first Age; in the first part of it, *Infancy*,
neither receive any Pleasure our selves,
nor give to others any thing but Trouble;
being all the benefit of Infancy, that
it, however vain and miserable we are,
have no Apprehension, nor any sense
thereof: And as for Childhood, in it we
do delight in Vanity, and therefore
what can we expect, but that Vanity should
be our Recompence?

*If in our early Days, Dame Nature's Prime,
With foolish Toys we Trifle out our time;
Alas! too evidently it appears,
Our Vanity increases with our Years.*

Then let each pray, In this young Age of
[mine,
To Wisdom, Lord, do thou my Heart
[incline.

THE

The Second AGE, From Ten Years to Twenty.



*Psal. xxv. 7. Remember not the sins
my Youth for thy goodness sake, O Lord*

*Unbridl'd Youth now enters in apace,
And runs, like to the un-curb'd Horse, his Race*

And if not kept and curb'd, his headstrong Will
Will quickly plunge him in all sorts of Ill.
Watch him but narrowly, and you'll soon find
Whether to Vice or Vertue he's inclin'd;
And as you see his Inclination stir,
You'll best know which to use, the Curb or Spur.

WE are now entred upon the Second
Age of Man's Life; in which (ac-
cording to the Rules of Astrology) he is
under the Domination of the Planet Mer-
cury: And the first Five Years of this Ten,
more grievous to him than any thing he
is yet met withal. In the former Age, he
was but as it were just come out of his
Nurse's hands, and scarce knew what it was
to Play, before he fell under the subjection
of a School-Master, which keeps him in
that Bondage, that he never goes to School
without with repining, and is never at Play but
with fear. And in this whole Age, while
he is under the Charge of another, it is no
other to him than a Prison; and therefore
he eagerly longs for, and earnestly aspires
to that Age, in which, being freed from
the Tutelage of another, he may become
Master of himself: so that oftentimes he
throws Time forward with his Shoulder, as
were, that he may the sooner enjoy his
due for Liberty; which when he has at-
tain'd

tain'd, perhaps he knows not how to use it. For many times they that obtain their Liberty too soon, do thereby make themselves the Slaves of Sin for ever. This is the time of Man's Probation, in which he either makes or mars himself : If he gives way to the Allurements of Vice, he is undone ; where Vice is embrac'd in Youth, the commonly Vertue is neglected in Age ; where a Tree blossoms not in the Spring, it will hardly bear Fruit in Autumn ; a Man generally following all his Life-time, what he first addresses himself to in his Youth. How miserable therefore is a Man's Condition, and how full of Vanity, when his future Happiness depends on the well-ordering his Youth ; and yet the Philosopher tells us, That at this time his Mind is inconstant, his Fancy fading, his Affections fickle, his Love uncertain, and his Likeness as light as the Wind ; the Prime of Youth (as another saith) being like the Flowers of the Pine-Tree, which are beautiful to the Eye but unfavoury to the Taste. For if Youth blushes not at Beauty, it carries not the Antidote of Wisdom against Flattery, Folly will be the next Haven it will harbour in. But setting aside what the Philosophers have predicated on this subject, let us see what the Scriptures say of this

That it is a Condition wherein we are most apt to go astray, is witnessed by *Job*, who in the time of his Affliction cry'd out, that *he was made to possess the Iniquities of his Youth*; which is as much as if he had said, Thou makest me now suffer for those Iniquities which I committed in my Youth, *Job* 13. 26. And *Zophar the Naamatbite* setting forth the fearful State of the Wicked, tells us, among many other Calamities that come upon him, That *his Bones are full of the Sins of his Youth*. And even *David* himself, though he were a Man after God's own Heart, yet he earnestly begs of him, not to remember the Sins of his Youth. And well may it be thus with Youth, seeing at this Age, Pleasure is the Idol which their souls adore, and which they are in the most earnest quest of; running, like the industrious Bee, from Flower to Flower, to suck the Sweets of Pleasure; but by reason they have not their Senses exercis'd to discern between Good and Evil, they oft suck Poison where they sought for Pleasure. 'Tis upon this Account the Preacher speaks to young Men so Ironically; *Rejoice, O Young Man, in thy Youth* (says he) *and let thine Heart cheer thee in the days of thy Youth; and walk in the ways of thy Heart, and the sight of thine Eyes: Solomon* knew very well that

their Inclinations at this Age would lead them to take such Courses : but his Design was not to encourage them therein, but rather to let them see the danger of so doing ; and therefore he immediately adds, *But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into Judgment* : As if he should say, If you will follow after vain Pleasures, and gratifie your sensual Appetites with earthly and unclean Delights, go on, if you think fitting ; but know withal, that there will come a day of Reckoning at last, in which you will be sure to pay for all, for *God will bring thee into Judgment* ; and therefore (says he) if you will take my Advice, *Remove Sorrow or Anger, as the Margin has it) from thy Heart, and put away Evil from thy Flesh* : And if you ask how you shall do that ? It is not (as if he should say) by following after Carnal Delights, and gratifying your own Childish and Youthful Inclinations (*for Childhood and Youth are Vanity*) but by *Remembering now thy Creator in the days of thy Youth* ; which is the Advice he gives them in the beginning of the 12th. Chapter for which he gives in the latter end, this weighty Reason, *For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil.*

These Things being seriously weigh'd, this Second Age of Man cannot but appear to be full of Vanity ; and therefore it was not without Reason, that the Apostle Paul, exhorts young *Timothy* to *flee youthful Lusts* ; which that he might the better do, he bids him *follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace* ; as if he had said, The only way to flee youthful Lusts is to have the Soul fill'd with Grace, *1 Tim. 11. 22* And if we consider how often Youth have been led astray, to the Grief of their Parents, and their own Ruin, we cannot but think, that it concerns them, in this Age, especially, to keep their Hearts with all diligence ; and yet without God's gracious Assistance, all their Diligence won't do, for the Heart is deceitful above all Things ; and not only so, but desperately wicked, so that there's no knowing of it : And is it not then a vain Thing for young Men to trust to their own Hearts ? If we will believe *Solomon*, he tells us, *That he that trusts to his own Heart, is a Fool*, *Pro. 28. 26*.

But let us a little exemplifie Things ; and we shall see how ready Persons at this Age are to deceive themselves : How many that are by their Parents put to School, that thereby they might learn what wou'd be for their Advantage in time to come ; do

by their playing the Truant, and neglecting their Learning, both deceive themselves and their Parents; which many times they afterwards, (that is, when it is too late) have themselves repented of. And what can more set forth the Vanity of this Age, than this, that tho' so many have trod in the same Path, and always have afterwards confess'd it was an Error, and have repented of it, yet those that follow 'em will take no Warning, but go on in it still? And yet that this is really the Case of most that go to School, every Day's Experience shews us

And when they have thus vainly squander'd away their time, and neglected their Learning, and thereby intail'd upon themselves the Name of Blockheads ever after, and render'd themselves unfit for any genteel Employment; perhaps their Friends may put them out Apprentice to some honest Calling, and then think they had provided for them all their Life time: But those Youths, that took so much Liberty when they went to School, know not how to undergo so severe a Restraint as they find an Apprenticeship to be; and therefore when they have hardly serv'd half their Time, nor learn'd a quarter of their Trade, they leave their Masters by running away from them; and thereby once more defeat themselves

elves of the Means of obtaining a Livelihood hereafter, and their Parents of the Hopes they had that they wou'd have done Well. And when it is again too late, they may perhaps repent of their last Folly, as well as of their former; and in a little time become as weary of their ill gotten Liberty, as of the Servitude from which they run away to obtain it. These are the things that frequently befall Youth in this Second Stage of Life; And yet what can be more vain and foolish? But if they happen to behave themselves more prudently, and have taken up a Resolution to serve their Times, yet they still look upon their Servitude as such a Burden, that at the best they are extremely uneasie under it, and look upon their present Station as a Bondage more insupportable than that of Egypt to the *Israelites*.

And if we look to Persons whose high Birth and Education, sets them a vast Distance above these, yet whilst at these Years they are under Tutors and Governors, they are still under the same Uneasiness; esteeming Life it self but a Burden, till the Clog of Subjection be taken off, and they attain that Liberty in which they promise themselves such Mountains of Happiness; and yet when they come to enjoy

it, are as uneasie under it. They now think they want nothing but Liberty to do what they list; but this Liberty being obtain'd, they come to want a Thousand Things which now they know nothing of.

Now what can render this Age more Vain, than thus to be so restless and uneasie under it, for they know not what, or else for that which will still make 'em more miserable? So that the whole Advantage of this Age seems to be, that they grow higher in Stature; but as to Discretion, they still keep the same Measure, (but with less Innocence) as in Childhood. And tho' they seem asham'd of what they did in their Childhood, yet has their Childhood as much reason, cou'd it but look forward, to be asham'd of what it do's in its Youth: For how strong are their Promises, and how weak their Performance! In every State Satan lays his Snares for 'em, and tho' they were never so obvious, yet will they rather willingly run into them, than to take care to avoid 'em. In short, he that passes this Age with the greatest Caution, will yet have cause enough to pray with David, *Remember not against me the Sins of my Youth, for thy Goodness sake, O Lord.*

*And thus Life's Second Stage past o'er we see,
And still the Sum of all is Vanity.*

The

The Third AGE.

From Twenty to Thirty Years.



1 Tim. xi. 22. Flee Youthful Lusts.

Youthful Lusts does the young Man invade,
 which behold a Goat his Emblem's made:
 wing he's unto Goatish Lust inclin'd,
 most do by too sad Experience find;
 in this Age doat upon Women kind:

*But thus to let unbridled Lust prevail,
Is but to take a Serpent by the Tail;
Which who so does, unto his cost will find
Such Pleasures always leave a sting behind.*

WE are now come to the Third Age of our Vanity; in which we may behold Man, according to his Wish, at Liberty; the Age wherein he has his Choice to take the way of Vertue or of Vice, and either to chuse Reason or Passion for his Guide: And now his Passion entertains him with a Thousand Delights, prepares for him a Thousand Baites, and presents him with a Thousand worldly Pleasures to surprize him; and all these so agreeable to headstrong and unbridled Youth, that there are very few that are not taken and beguiled by them, without preventing Grace, to their eternal Ruin. And what can be more Vain than to be drawn away with such vain Pleasures.

For when the Reckoning comes to be made up, What Pleasures are they that he then pursues: They are but vicious and polluted Pleasures, which ever hold him in a restless Fever: Pleasures which at the beginning end in Repentance, and like Sweet-Meat are of a hard Digestion: Pleasures that are bought with Pain; and in a moment perish but leave behind a lasting Guilt, and last

remov

morfe of Conscience: They promise not much of Sweetness before they are enjoy'd, as they leave Bitterness behind them afterwards. I need not here speak of the Mischiefs, Quarrels, Debates, Wounds and Murthers, Sicknes, and other Dangers, into which sometimes the Incontinency, and sometimes the Insolency of this ill-guided Age does plunge Men: But if what they call Pleasure, be nothing but Displeasure, and the Sweetness of Lust, be as an Infusion of Wormwood, how displeasing must the Displeasure be which they feel, and how bitter the Bitterness which they taste?

Behold then the Life of a Young Man, who rid of all the Checks that were upon him, the Government of his Parents and Masters, abandons himself to all the Exortances of his unruly Passion; which like an unclean Spirit possessing him, throws him sometime into the Water, and then into the Fire; sometimes carries him clear over a Rock, and at other times flings him headlong to the Bottom. He now condemns the Pleasures of his Childhood for those that seem more Manly; but, alas! they do but seem so, for the very Remembrance of these Pleasures shall hereafter sting him like Adders, and afflict him with Thousand Terrors, though now his Thoughts

Thoughts are intent only how to satisfy his loose Desires, and take his fill of Pleasures; to which end, his wandering and wanton Senses will quickly open their Windows to let Sin in, tho' they have no Passage for it out again. And the inordinate and impetuous Desires of Man at this Age, are as insatiable as the Horseleach, still desiring, and daily craving more: Yet those that give themselves up to the Conduct of their Lusts, at this Age, will find their Desires increase, when their ability to act is exhausted: and how can it be otherwise? For if they suffer themselves to be led Captive by their Lusts, when the Faculties of their Souls are most strong and vigorous, how shall they regain their Liberty, when by an Habit of Sin, they are grown weak and feeble? No, certainly, the more a Man indulges his Sin, the more he shall find it increase, and the more it will gather Strength; for as I have in another place observ'd,

*When once Sin gains an Entrance at the Door,
It will come in, and may go out no more.*

And now what a poor thing is Man! What a meer Shop of Vanity! That in the Bloom and Beauty of his Age, gives his Strength unto Women, and his Ways unto

his that which destroyeth Kings ! That has so
 res; little regard to the Conduct of Reason, that
 from he abandons himself to the pleasing of his
 s to sensual Appetite : And instead of relishing
 or it those pure and intellectual Pleasures that are
 npe- adapted to a rational Creature, and much
 s in- more to a new Creature, he follows lying
 and Vanities, and walks in those Paths that will
 give bring him to Misery here, and eternal
 ufts, Ruin hereafter.

What can be a greater Folly than to see
 and Man run the Risque of Damnation for
 suffer those brutish Pleasures that are common
 ufts, to the very Beasts as well as he ; and at
 most longest are of so short a Continuance that
 again they are like the crackling of Thorns under
 Sing, Pct? Tell me, what wou'd you think, of
 No, him who being thirsty, should refuse to
 s Sing, quench his Thirst at a pure Christal Stream,
 d the and yet drink of a foul nasty Puddle?
 have Would you not think him highly sordid
 and extreemly foolish? And yet, just such
 that.

Door,

*the brutish Man, who will not love his God,
 and yet can dote on a defiled Clod.*

Man
 in the But it will not be amiss to consider what
 es his will be the End of these things, and what
 e unto will be the Advantage of them: If Drun-
 that kennef

kennels or Uncleanneſs and Gaming, would yield a Man any Comfort in a dying hour, it would be more excuſable to purſue 'em with ſo much eagerneſs, and be ſo very fond of 'em: But if the End of theſe things be Death; If all the Advantages we ſhall reap by 'em, is Poverty and Diſgrace, and that they impair the Health, ſpoil the Memory, cauſe ſeveral Diſtempers, and ſhorten Life it ſelf; and, which is Ten thouſand times worſe, hazard the eternal Ruin of our Immortal Souls; I may well take up the Apoſtle's Words, and ſay, *What Profit have ye in thoſe things whereof, ye are now aſhamed?* Is it not much better to Remember now your Creator, in the Days of your Youth? And then you may be ſure he will not forſake you when you come to Old Age.

But methinks I hear ſome ſay, as a Young Man once did,

*Talk not to me of what will come to Morrow,
An Ounce of Mirth is worth a Pound of Sorrow;
Trouble will come, whether we will or no,
I'll never Banish Pleaſure, and chuſe Woe.*

To which, I shall only return the same
Answer that was given to him;

*Then chuse not Sin; touch not forbidden Things;
Nor taste those Joys which endless Sorrow
For Sin will surely in the End procure, (brings:
Those Pains which will beyond all time indure.
Repent betimes, lest thou too late complain;
For there's a Time when Tears will be in vain.*

The

The Fourth AGE.

From Thirty to Forty Years.



Jer. ix. 22. Let not the strong Man glory in his Strength.

*To the Fourth Age Man's now arriv'd at length,
His Bones are full of Marrow and of Strength;
Yet without Grace he still goes more astray,
Like wand'ring Passengers that lose their Way:*

rs. *For his Corruptions with his Strength gets
and he in Wickedness does more abound: (ground,
ous whilst he weaker Persons Captive takes,
himself a Slave to his own Lusts he makes.*

WE are now come to the Fourth Age of
Man, wherein he is past his youthful
boom, (for Blossoms, how pleasant, and
how gay soever, won't continue always)
and now surely some Fruit may be expect-
ed: But, alas! how great reason has every
man to complain of himself, as the Pro-
phet *Hosea* does of *Ephraim*? That he is an
empty Vine, and brings forth Fruit unto
himself; and yet even that Fruit is com-
pared to the Vine of *Sodom*, and the Grapes
are treafured up unto the Clusters of *Gomorrath*. And
there is no Fruit brought forth unto God:
need what Fruit he does bring forth, is
for himself; for now he is casting about
how to get an Estate, and to grow Rich
and Great in the World: Or if he has an
estate, then he is ambitious of Honour;
the least Rub he meets with in his
way, stirs up his irascible Faculties, makes
him angry and discontented, and takes away
the Comfort of all his Enjoyments.
An eminent Instance whereof, we have in
King David, who was a great Man, high in the
King's Favours, advanc'd above all the
Princes.

Princes of the Empire ; bow'd to, and reverenc'd by all the Servants of the King and that by the King's special Command What cou'd a Man think *Haman* shou'd desire more? Or what cou'd render such a Man uneasie? And yet, one little inconsiderable Affront, the want of a Bow from *Mordecai* the Jew, robb'd him of all his Quiet, that he cou'd take no Satisfaction in all the Honours he receiv'd from others though Princes bow'd before him, yet whilst *Mordecai* did not, it was all nothing to him : And how vain is that Happiness that lies in every Man's Power to deprive us of? And yet so it does of all the Happiness that lies without us : But let us pursue the Instance of *Haman* a little further and we shall see how many Accidents intervene to obstruct our Designs; and what a Tennis Ball of Fortune that Man is, who places his Felicity in outward things.

Haman perceiving *Mordecai* neglected (rather that he refus'd) to pay that Homage to him that all the Princes of the Empire gladly offer'd, it fill'd him full of Rage and cut him to the very Heart; for his Soul was swell'd with Ambition, which tyranniz'd more over him, than he intended to have done over the Jews; and so tormented him that he could not rest : The great

of his Wrath, appears by the greatness
the Revenge he had design'd; which
is not to take away the Life of *Mordecai*
one, that was too small a Victim to be
er'd up to *Haman's* Ambition; 'twas no-
ing less than the whole Nation of the
Jews, they must be all destroy'd to satisfie
great Revenge: Nor will he spare for
st to effect it; and therefore when he
comes to beg this cruel Boon of the King,
he may make it go down the more glib-
he offers Ten thousand Talents to have
accomplished: But the King is more ge-
ous than to have a Favour bought; and
therefore grants his Petition freely: *Haman*
represented the *Jews* as a People not
ing to live; and therefore 'tis no won-
that *Ahasuerus* is so willing they should
Haman having obtain'd this Grant of the
King, loses no time, but hastens away the
with Letters to put the Decree in Exe-
cution: And to add more to his Satisfac-
tion has a New Honour conferr'd upon him;
he only is invited by the Queen to ac-
company the King at her Banquet; and
not only the first time, but the second
: From whence he goes home with the
most Affurance imaginable. But all this
Addition to his Honour was worth
nothing,

nothing, whilst *Mordecai* refus'd to pay him Homage; the want of a poor Bow from him, was an allay to all his Happiness, and fill'd him full of Wrath and Indignation; mitigate the boiling whereof, he resolv'd *Mordecai's* Death shall precede the general Destruction of his People; and therefore goes the next day to the King with a design to have him hang'd immediately: But instead thereof (such are the inscrutable Workings of Divine Providence, whose ways to us are oft past finding out) whilst *Mordecai* is set on Horseback, array'd in the Royal Habiliments, *Haman* is forc'd to be his Lacquey it by his side, and be himself the Herald of his Fame. But, oh, what Rage and what Confusion was *Haman* fill'd with at this unexpected Accident! And how were all his Measures spoil'd hereby! And this (as his Wife truly prophesied) was but the Forerunner of his approaching Ruin. For whilst he was bewailing his wretched Disappointment, he was sent for to the Queen's Banquet, which usher'd in the last part of his Tragedy: being from thence led to the Gallows he prepar'd for *Mordecai* and hang'd thereon. Thus the Height to which his Ambition brought him, was to hang'd upon a Gallows Fifty Cubits high.

And is this the Fruit of our Ripe Age? No wonder then the Psalmist tells us, *That every Man, even at his best Estate, is Vanity.* This surely is miscall'd the *Perfect Age*, unless by perfect, we mean only that in this Age it is, that all the Imperfections of the humane Nature, which before this lay hid under the undisguis'd Simplicity of Childhood, or the more airy Lightness of untied Youth, appear in this Age in their full Perfection; which still intails a greater Vanity upon it. For now those Sins that were before but in the Bud, appear full grown: We are asham'd indeed of those and Trifles we coveted whilst Childhood was upon us; yet still we are as guilty of the self-same Crimes; but with this only Difference, that now they are attended with greater Aggravations.

Before we play'd in fear; and after that, our short-liv'd Pleasures were attended on with long Repentance: And now we are pursuing the self-same Vanities with greater confidence, and more Assurance. For what's the Honour we court now, but such another empty Bubble as those we were so fond of in our sportive Childhood? And for the obtaining of it, how often do we perpetrate the most nefarious Crimes, Guilt whereof pursues us to our Graves:

Our

Our Strength, of which we make so great
boast, serves only to enable us to make
Prey of those that are more weak; and
a strong hand to obtain that which is
thing worth when we enjoy it. And we
can be more Vain than thus to spend
Strength for nought, and labour in the
for very Vanity?

*And thus as in Life's Race we further run,
We see all's Vanity beneath the Sun.
For as each Age more Years we do obtain,
So still our Vanity becomes more vain:
And we a farther Progress make in Sin,
Which in the End, will unto Judgment bring*

The Fifth AGE.

From Forty to Fifty Years.



al. xlix. 12. Nevertheless Man being in Honour abideth not.

*in Man's Fourth Age now being past and gone,
the rowling Waves, the Fifth straight follows on,
wherein, whilst thus he doth in Triumph ride,
looks with scorn on all the World beside.*

Attended

*Attended by his Heralds, to Proclaim
The growing Greatness of his spreading Fame
But Vanity does to him still betide;
For in's new Honour don't long abide.*

WE are now come to the Fifth Age of Man's Life, in which, (according to the Division propos'd in the Introduction) he arrives at the Fiftieth Year of his Age: and it is a common (and perhaps true) Saying, That *he who is not Handsome at Thirty, nor Strong at Forty, nor Wise at Fifty will never be either Handsome, Strong or Wise*. So that this seems to be the Age most famous for the attaining of Wisdom, and indeed such it ought to be; for Man having now liv'd the better half of his Life, must by his own Experience (if he observe any thing) come to be Wise: For, as *Elihu* well observes, *Job 32. 7. Days should speak, and multitude of Years should teach Wisdom*. And yet if we come more strictly to examine what this Wisdom is, we shall hardly find it to be the right kind; which is *Pure, Peaceable, Gentle, full of Mercy and good Fruits*; but rather that which is *Earthly, Sensual and Carnal*; which is describ'd by the Apostle *James, Jam 3. 15, 16.* and like those who the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaks of, which *are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge*.

knowledge: They are indeed at this Age
 very ready to boast of Wisdom, and take
 as an Affront to be thought otherwise;
 but they are never the wiser for that, for
 the same Prophet in another place speaks,
They have rejected the Word of the Lord, and
what Wisdom is in them? Jer. 8. 9. For a
 Man at this Age to be laying new Foun-
 dations of Life, and seeking so eagerly to
 grasp after more, when at the same time
 he refuses to enjoy what he has: What can
 be more vain? This is that sore Evil which
 the wisest of Men so much complains of,
Eccles. v. 13.

But since our Emblem represents one
 mounted to the highest pitch of Honour,
 in the most exalted Circumstances;
 that can see nothing above him but Hea-
 ven, but Crouds of Petitioners on every
 side below him; and that he has attain'd to
 this Dignity by his own Valour and Wis-
 dom; so that now it lies in his Power to
 make other Men happy; and therefore
 he must be so himself; and consequent-
 ly be exempted from Vanity. But, alas!
 is quite otherwise; there's no such happy
 state to be obtain'd below: And this the
 experience of those who have been exalted
 to this high Dignity sufficiently declares.
 Let us hear therefore what they say of

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them-

themselves, who are certainly the most competent Judges of the Uneasiness that is found therein. O Crown, said a great Persian Monarch, He that but knew how heavy thou fittest on the Head, would not vouchsafe to take thee up, though he should meet thee in his way. And yet this Prince gave Law to the whole World, and each Man's Fortune was what he was pleas'd to make it; and therefore to appearance could give to every Man Content: And yet we see himself confessing, That in the whole World, which he held in his hand, there was nothing but Grief and Unhappiness: and then how great a Vanity must it needs be for one to spend the best part of his Life in the pursuit of that, which in the end leaves him no other Legacy but that of Grief and Sorrow.

But if you will not take this Persian Monarch's Word, but think himself so vain, he was incapable to judge of what is Vanity; then hear the Judgment of King Solomon, a Man endow'd with Wisdom from above, beyond the rest of Men; nor was this all, but he was likewise one, whose immense Riches was so great, that Gold and Silver were as plentiful as the dropping Pebbles in the Street: Nay the Divine Historian tells us, That Gold was then

plong

mentiful, that Silver was (scarce worth taking up) nothing accounted of, in the days of *Solomon*: And as he wanted not for Treasure, so neither did he for a Heart to use it: and yet this Mighty King, and wisest Prince that e'er possess'd a Throne, when he had try'd all the Felicities that Wealth could Purchase, or the World afford; and concludes with this short Summary even of all his large Experience, *That all is Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit.*

Having heard the Opinion of *Solomon* in this matter, one would think his Testimony to be sufficient of it self; for what can one say that comes after the King? Yet that one may be convinced of this Truth, to wit, That the highest Station a Man can reach again to in this World, is but Vanity, I am willing it shall be confirm'd in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses.

And even *Augustus Cæsar* himself (who it is said built up the Temple of *Janus*, and possess'd the whole World in Peace, and in those Days the Prince of Peace was Born) nor bewailed his past Life; and amongst the infinite Toils of his Empire, wish'd for the repose of the meanest of his Subject; saying, He should esteem that a happy Day that would ease him of his insupportable weariness and suffer him to live quietly among the least.

And it was the Saying of *Tiberius*, his Successor, That he held the Empire as a Wolf by the Ears; and that if he could quit his hold without the Danger of being bitten, he would gladly do it. And another great Man assures us, That whatever Greatness or Ambition promiseth, it is but the suffering of much Evil, to get more; and what can be more vain?

To sum up all that can be said of this Age, The greatest Advantage of it is, when by a serious Reflection upon what is past, we come to see that all is Vanity; That Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain and fading; That our greatest Strength does but shew our Weakness, and our greatest Wisdom does but manifest our own Folly. For when by all our Toil and Labour, and, by the very utmost of our Study and Contenance, we have attained to so high a Station, that we have nothing more left to wish for; we then come to find by Experience that all we have got is not worth the Thousandth part of the Pains we have taken to get it; being neither certain, nor satisfying, and by consequence most Vain.

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The Sixth AGE.

From Fifty to Sixty Years.



Luke xii. 15. Take heed and beware of covetousness.

For Man, when Threescore Winters he has told,
 How places all his Hopes in Bags of Gold.
 Who can but this strange Vanity admire;
 The less we want, the more we still desire?

*He has too much, and yet he wou'd have more
Starving himself i'th' midst of all his Store
What can more vain than a Rich Miser be?
Or more Emphatically Poor than he?*

WE are now come to the Sixth Age of the Life of Man; which according to the Seasons of the Year, represents the latter end of *Autumn*, or the beginning of *Winter*, when all things are going down into the Earth: And sure it is now high time for Man to think of returning thither; and to be in good earnest having his Heart and Affections fix'd upon things above, where his chief hopes should be lodg'd. But alas! With Sorrow be spoken, the matter is quite otherwise with the greatest part of Mankind. Their Hearts are now more glew'd to the Earth than ever; and they are grasping after present things as eagerly, as if they were still to live the Days of *Metusilab*. 'Tis certainly a strange Vanity, and much to be lamented, that at this Age, when 'tis high time to sit loose from the World, he should make the greatest Courtship to it; and that he may obtain it, is willing to make Voyages by Sea, Journies by Land, run a thousand Hazards, and perhaps many Shipwracks, is in perpetual fear and trouble; and in

purchasing Wealth, it may be loseth his
 life: Or if he don't, he robs himself of that
 repose that should make his Life comfort-
 able. But to demonstrate his Folly yet
 more, let us suppose that he has gain'd by
 his Travel, and that he has spoiled the
 whole East of its Pearls, and drawn dry all
 the Mines of the West: Will all this satis-
 fy him? And will he then be quiet? No-
 thing less: For by all his Acquisitions he
 gains but more Disquiet both of Mind and
 body; from one Travel falling into ano-
 ther; never ending, but only changing his
 miseries: He desir'd to have 'em, and now
 fears to lose 'em; he got 'em in burning
 heat, and possesses 'em in trembling Cold:
 He adventur'd among Thieves to get 'em,
 and now fears by Thieves to lose 'em: In
 short, coming from all his Voyages, he
 comes as it were into a Prison; and the
 end of his Bodily Travels, is but the be-
 ginning of the Troubles of his Mind: And
 this of all Vanities is surely the most vain.
 And yet thus, thro' the just Judgment of
 God, it generally happens: For this Devil
 of Covetousness persuades him he has some
 rare and excellent thing; which makes it
 rare with him as with those poor Crea-
 tures, whom the Devil seduces under Co-
 lour of relieving their Poverty; who find
 F 4 their

their Hands full of Leaves, when they thought to find 'em full of Crowns. He possesseth, or rather is possessed with a thing wherein is neither Power nor Vertue; more base and unprofitable than the least Herb of the Earth: Yet he hath heap'd together this vile Excrement, and is grown so Brutish, as therewith to Crown his Head when he ought to tread it under his Feet.

But however that be, is he satisfy'd with it now he has it? Not at all: Nay, so far is he from being satisfy'd, that he is more dissatisfy'd than ever: For Covetousness is of that nature, that the more a Man drinks the more he is a thirsty; the more he eats the more he is a hungry: It is a Dropsie that swells him till he bursts, before he can be satisfy'd. But there is a greater Vanity in it still; for it makes a Man dig a Pit and carefully draw the Water, and after all won't suffer him to Drink: In the midst of a River he is dry with Thirst, and in a heap of Corn cries out of Famine. This Covetous Wretch has Goods but will not use them, and Garments, but dares not put them on: And tho' he is possess'd of that in which he joys, he don't enjoy it. The sum of all is, That of all which he has, he has nothing; and surely this must not only be Vanity, but Vexation of Spirit too.

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And yet this is not all: The Completion of his Misery is, when he comes to lose them: For tho' he finds no real Pleasure in their Possession, yet he finds a sensible Pain in their Loss; which whenever it happens, whether it be by Shipwrak, Fire, or any other Accident, then he cries, weeps, and torments himself, like a little Child that has lost his Play-game, which yet is nothing worth; and he conceits himself not only spoil'd, but utterly undone. For having plac'd his All in these things, the Loss of them brings him to Despair, and that oftentimes to an untimely End, by laying violent Hands upon himself, and bringing his own Life to an unhappy Period. To which the wicked Ways by which he has attain'd his Riches, which now fills his Conscience with inexpressible Remorse, contributes not a little. And what now can be more vain, than for a Man that has liv'd Three-score Years in the World, to macerate his Body, debilitate his Mind, and lose his Soul, without any either Pleasure or Contentment?

The Seventh AGE.

From Sixty to Seventy Years.



H. b. ix 27. It is appointed unto Men once to die.

*Now the last Sands of Man's short Life are run
Death strikes his Dart home, and his Work is done
He has run until he's almost out of Breath;
Now see how he on Crutches creeps to Death.*

Of all he toil'd for, he can only have
A sad Cold Coffin and a gloomy Grave.
Then cease your Tears, for 'tis in vain to cry;
Heav'n's great Decree is past, and Man must Die.

WE are now come to the last Scene of
Man's Life; in which Death lets
down the Curtain, and the Play is done.
And now surely Man will be willing to
go off the Stage of this World; having
acted his part, and so make room for others:
For what should he do here? May he not
now say, as *Barzillai* to the same purpose
said to *David*, *I am this day Seventy Years*
old; and can I taste what I Eat or what I
Drink? Can I hear any more the Voice of sing-
ing Men and singing Women? Wherefore should
I then be any longer a Burden to my self or others?
For now the Days are come in which he
may well say, he has no Pleasure in them:
The Keepers of the House begin to tremble,
and the strong Men to bow themselves;
yea, the Grinders are ready to cease, be-
cause they are few, and those that look out
at the Window are almost darkned, as the
Preacher speaks, *Eccles. 12. 3. I confess, by*
Reason of Strength, a temperate Life, and
a hail Constitution of Body, many do out-
live this Age, and reach unto Four score and
upwards; but then, as Hopkins says in the
90th.

90th. Psalm, *We count such Wonderous Old*; but besides that, all their boasted Strength is but Labour and Sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and they fly away. And yet notwithstanding a'l the Vanity, and all the Infirmities of Life, we are not willing to die; no, though we scarce know how to live, we care not to hear of Death; for as the Young Man thinks he has a great while to live: so he that has liv'd longest hopes to live a little longer. And this is yet another Instance of Vanity. Is it not unaccountable to hear a Stranger continually wishing he were at Home, and yet when a Messenger is sent on purpose to fetch him, that he should be loth to go? Or that a Waytaring Man on his Journey, should so over-load himself with thick Clay (as Worldly things are call'd) that he could scarce get forward? Or if we should see such a one Building by the way, should we not think he had forgot the Place to which he was to go? And yet thus vain are the most of Men: They encumber themselves so much with the Things of this World, that they have hardly time to think upon another: And build Tabernacles here, as if they were never to depart hence; and yet these Men will profess to be Pilgrims and Strangers in this World.

How

How many are there that call this Life a Prison, but yet neither live like Prisoners for Delights and Delicacies become not better) nor desire their Liberty. And what can be more vain than such a Temptation? If we were truly Strangers, we should rejoice when we were near our Home: And were we truly Pilgrims, we should hasten to our Journey's end; and if we did indeed think Life a Prison, we should give Death a better welcome, since that would procure our Liberty. Some call this Life a Banishment, others a Punishment, and others Death: But if Life be a Banishment, why are we so unwilling to be restored? And if a Punishment, why seek we not to be releas'd? Or if it be a Death, why sleep we in it, and desire not to be raised? Our backwardness herein too plainly shows, these are but empty Words; we are such as commend Abstinence, while we surfeit themselves with Dainties; and take course of Mortification in their Cups. Nor not one of those who say Life is a Prison, desire to be freed: Nor one of these will be enfranchis'd: Nor do those who pretend Life is a Punishment, desire to be deliver'd. Nor can I exempt my self out of this Number; For though I have found all things in the World to be nothing but Vanity,

nity, and the greatest Vanity therein to be
 Man; and my self of all Men to be the
 most vain; yet I have réjoyced all my Days
 in a thing of nought, and still thought in
 my Heart to put far away the Evil Day, by
 approaching to the Seat of Iniquity: But I
 found that the Eyes of the Almighty were
 upon me, and that I groped but in Dark-
 ness to wound my self. Wretched Man
 How long have I been in a miserable State
 and knew it not. How long have I been
 Stranger to my Father's House, and return-
 ed not? I have read it, dear Lord, in thy
 Book; and I have found it by Experience
 in that publick Register of Man's Mortali-
 ty; I have seen how this Life is fidly con-
 pared to a Post, and what is swifter? To
 Weaver's Shuttle, and what is quicker
 To a Tale that is told, and what is shorter
 To a Shadow, and what vanisheth sooner
 To Grass, and what is more withering
 To the Track of a Ship, and what is less
 appearing? To the Flight of a Bird, and
 what cuts the Air more speedily? And
 yet for all this, I have loaded my self with
 thick Clay, as if I were too fleet in this
 Course.

But whatever Satisfaction a Man may
 take in these Things while he lives, they
 so far from being Helps, that they are
 drawn

to be frances when he comes to die: The Things
e sets his Heart on here, will grieve him
Days to the Heart at last, to think that he must
nt leave 'em all behind him. And this is eve-
, by y Mans's Case, for *Naked came he into the*
But *World, and Naked must he depart ou' of it:*
were And though he cou'd carry 'em with him
Dark (which is impossible) they would signifie
Man nothing: For *Riches profit not in the Day of*
State *Wrath.* Nay rather will they not help to
een aggravate our Condemnation, because we
return have not us'd 'em as we ought, nor done
in th that Good with 'em for which they were
riend given us. For though we attribute our
ortain Riches to our own Wildom, Diligence and
com industry, and so *Sacrifice to our own Net,*
? To *and burn Incense to our own Drags,* as the Pro-
ricker phet speaks; yet the Almighty will in the
orter end make us know, that it was he that gave
ooner us Power to get Wealth; and that we
er ing ought to have us'd it to his Glory: And we
t is le must now come to a Reckoning, and shew
d, and now we have employ'd it.

? And And how deplorable an Instance of Va-
elf wanity is this, That Man, in all the Ages of
in his Life, should spend his Strength for
thought, and labour in the Fire for very Va-
n nity: By all his Toils, when he's the most
they successful, obtaining only that which is so
re Hear from helping him, that by increasing of
dran his

his Sin and Guilt, it plunges him at last into Eternal Ruin.

But though Vanity is the constant Attendant of every Man in his Natural Estate; who through the Deceitfulness of his own Heart, puts his Trust in Vanity, and for Vanity comes to be his Recompence. Yet there is a more Excellent Way; which the Wise Man summs up in a few Words which is, *To Fear God, and keep his Commandments*; for this is the Whole Duty of Man. I shall conclude all, with this short Abstract of the Seven Ages of Man's Life. Since Sacred Records do without dispute,
The Age of Man to Seventy Years compute.
The First Ten Years Nature do's to us lend,
In Infant Cries and Childish Sports we spend:
The Second Ten, at 'Prentice and at School
We spend our time, and wisely play the Fool:
The Third, in which our Beauty's in its prime,
In Youthful Lusts we pass away our time:
In the Fourth Ten our Manly Strength appears,
And we in Work and Labour spend our Years.
In the Fifth Ten to Wisdom we pretend,
Which often proves but Folly in the end:
In the Sixth Ten, when Time and Strength is past
We grasp the world as if we'd hold it fast:
In the last Ten, what we have got, we leave,
And Death's cold Hand do's us of Life bereave.
Thus may we plainly see in every Station,
That all is Vanity and meer Vexation. Ru

Rules for Christian Walking:

I. *In Adversity.*

THE Rules of Wisdom concerning a Christian Man's Estate, are these: First, General. Secondly, Special.

The *general* rule for all Estates, is this: Be prepared for any estate, contented in every estate, and assure thy self the present state (whatsoever it is) is best for thee, no' not ever in thy sense, yet in God's gracious and wise ordering of it. This Lesson the Apostle Paul hath well learned, *Phil.* 11, 12. *I can want, and abound; I can be full, and hungry: I have learned in all estates to be contented.*

The *special* rules are either for Prosperity, or for Adversity. Concerning adversity and afflictions, these are the rules of Christian Wisdom.

1. Consider thou art not placed here in the World by God, to enjoy the Pleasures of the World, but to enjoy God, which thou mayest do as well in affliction as in prosperity, and to cleave to him in his Service, looking for nothing but afflictions, as Pilgrim going to thy Country, the way whereunto lieth through afflictions. This Ground

Ground not laid, Men count Troubles a strange thing, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. and start at the mention of them, as the Apollles, *Job.* 11. 8. when they heard Christ speaking of going into *Fury*, where the *Jews* had lately sought to stone him. And note it to be a Corruption of the Heart, to be more grieved for thine own troubles, than the troubles of the Church, for private than public Evils.

2. Lay up Strength and Comforts aforehand; as first, Humility, to over-master and tame the pride and rebellion of our Hearts, and to bring in contentedness to sweeten our Troubles, and our Labour will be well spent; for if we can relish the hardest part of our Life, our whole Life else will assuredly be more sweet and joyful.

2. Grow up in the Knowledge of God which will make thee rise up in much Comfort, and will bring in Comfort against the confused Heaviness, Distrust and dangerous Affections and Passions which else in Trouble might beat us down and off him.

3. Get assurance of Faith which will sweetly warm the Heart in the sense of God's Love in Jesus Christ; the Fruit of which will be, first, To enable us to trust our selves with God in any estate and be assured the Lord is with us in Fire

and Water, *In the midst of the Valley of the shadow of Death.* Secondly, to depend on him for Strength; for howsoever Satan would make us believe our Affliction is greater than it is, or we are for it; yet we shall assure our hearts that the Lord hath measured it out for our strength, and *not above.* Thirdly, to wait upon him for a good Issue and seasonable Deliverance, who hath promised to turn it *to the best.* This shall keep us from fainting, distrust, and despair.

3. In all Evils of Punishment, take occasion to set upon the Evil of Sin, and revenge upon that; complain of it to God and Men, murmur and grudge at nothing else. If Affliction be sharper than ordinary, it is sure some Sin or Lust adds a Sting unto it. But this Rule mortifies Sin and unruly Passions, and will weaken the Heart, and make a Man say with the Church, *I will bear the Wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned.*

4. Make them no heavier than God maketh them, by Impatience, Frowardness, and looseness of Heart. God sometimes laies on a little Finger, and the froward Heart laies on the whole Hand and Loins, to make the Burden heavier with faithless heaviness and Distrust, which is but an addition.

addition of new and worse Troubles than the former. How inconsiderately do many Men load themselves with Troubles too too light in themselves, and on the Shoulders of wise Men, who can make a Vertue of Necessity, and step over a number of Rubs which others stoop to remove, and infinitely toil themselves? How do many in smaller Troubles, as discourtesie of Neighbours, unruliness of Children, unfaithfulness of Servants, smaller Losses and Crosses in Family-matters, give place to Unquietness, Impatience, and Passion, till their Folly have (by seeking to ease their Burden) encreased it from a Dram to a Talent? And now how unmeet are they for the Service of God? How unprofitable in any Christian Society? How froward and Heavy in Countenance, disguised in Speech, and impotent in their Behaviour? All which testify the frowardness of the Heart, wherein had there been a Dram of Christian Wisdom and Moderation, the Passion had not swelled to the cause, much less so far exceeded it.

5. Make not haste from under any Affliction; *He that believes, makes not haste*. But labour for a right use of it, rather than the removal; attain once a right use, and doubt not of a good Issue. Gold is not present

presently pulled out of the Fire so soon as
 it is cast in, but must stay a while till it be
 purged. A Musician strains up a String,
 and lets it not down, lest the Harmony and
 Musick be spoiled; So the Lord deals with
 his Children, but never forgets Mercy,
 nor measure; nay, it is Mercy so to mea-
 sure them, as they may be purged by them.

6 Observe and mark thy Troubles, and thy
 Disposition in them; First to grow up in Wis-
 dom and Experience by them; thus thy Suf-
 ferings will become wholesome Instructions.
 Observe where thou wast most pinched, and
 wherein thou tookest the greatest Comfort.
 Secondly, to grow up in an infallible hope
 of God's Goodness, and a good Issue for
 time to come. For this, observe God's
 reasonable hearing of thy Prayers, and the
 proofs of God's help in most needful times,
 which shall be a strong means to keep thee
 from fainting Fears, and Despairs for
 time to come. So did *David* in the case of
 the Lion and Bear, and through all the
 3d. Psalm. Thus the Apostle from Ob-
 servations of times past, gathers Assurance
 for the time present, and to come, 2 Cor.
 10. --- *Who delivered us from so great Death,*
and doth deliver us, and in whom we trust,
that he will yet hereafter deliver us. Thirdly,
 be able to comfort others with such Com-
 forts

forts as our selves were upheld within our Troubles, 2 Cor. 1. 4 Which comforteth us in all our Tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in Affliction, by the comfort wherewith our selves are comforted of God. Thus to the godly ariseth Light out of Darkness, Sweet comes out of Sowre, and Life out of the Eater Meats.

II. In Prosperity.

In Prosperity take these Directions:

1. If Riches encrease, set not thine Heart upon them, Psalm 62. 10. For why shouldst thou, considering the Danger? How easy it is to wax wanton? How hard for a rich Man to be saved? How few by outward things are drawn to the love of heavenly things? How many are insnared and choaked with them? How fitting and uncertain they be? How certainly we must leave them, or they us, and come to account for them.

2. In the carriage of thy Prosperity be suspicious of thy self, thankful to God, and return the Glory of it to him of whom thou receivest it. David, while he had Liberty easily strayed, Psalm 119. 67. Thankfulness is God's Tribute, which being denied him, he re-enters on his own, Deut. 28. 47. Because thou servedst not the Lord with Joyfulness, and a good Heart, in the abundance

all things, thou shalt serve thine Enemies in
anger, in thirst. and in need of all things.
do many Prodigals.

3. Fear the Cross before it come, and
provide for it. *The thing that I feared is come*
on me, Job 3. 25. and, he waited for his
change. It was an addition to the great
plague of Babylon, Isa. 46. 11. that Evil
should come on her, and she not know the
morning thereof, *Destruction shall come upon*
thee suddenly, & thou be aware. Therefore
pay the costs of Religion and well-doing
forehand.

4. Never account thy self prosperous,
if it be not well with Gods Church: Good
Uriah would not rest as long as the
Ark of the Lord was abroad, and his Lord
Joab in the Field. As a good Child being
in Health mourns and droops for the Mo-
ther's Sicknes. David thought it not fit to
be well in *sciled houses, and the Ark of God lie*
in tents: For the neglect whereof, the Jews
were reprov'd, Hag. 1. 4. Nehemiah, even
before the King, was of a sad Countenance,
and sorrowful at Heart, when he received
evil Tydings of Jerusalem, Chap 2. verse 2.
Ester and Mordecai joyed not in the greatest
advancements, so long as the Sentence a-
gainst the Jews was unrevers'd. And
Moses might have lived well, and at Plea-
sure

sure in Pharaoh's Court; but he chose rather to suffer affliction with God's people, than enjoy such pleasures.

5. In thy Prosperity consider the Affliction and Adversity of others. The contrary hereof was the Sin of the Princes of Israel living in Prosperity, *Amos 6. 6.* They lie on Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves on Beds, drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with Oil, but none remember the affliction of Joseph. The like of David his Inhumanity towards Lazarus. Yet some time it shall be Wisdom to go into a house of mourning, which will strike a deeper Impression; and to visit others in Adversity, and mark their Speeches, who embrace these outward Pleasures with greatest and sharpest Appetite, and thou shalt find the Affliction far more bitter, and their Sorrow in the Loss so much the sharper, as the Love was eager in injoying the Peace; and perhaps they will tell thee they were never such Gainers by all the Prosperity, as they were Losers by it, and Gainers by that present Affliction.

A

Threefold Alphabet,

Containing

R U L E S

O F

Christian Practice.

The First Precept of every Letter concerning our Duty towards God ; the Second towards our Neighbours ; the Third towards our Selves.

A.

A Wake with God in the morning, and before all things give him your first suits and calves of your lips, in 1. Confession of sin : 2. Petition of necessities for body and soul : 3. Thankfulness for mercies received, especially your late preservation, and protection of you and yours.

2. Account it not enough that your self love God, unless that you see all in your charge do the same.

3. Arm your self against whatsoever the y may bring forth : and upon all occasi-

G

ons

ons think on your happy redemption, with much thankfulness for so happy a conjunction of Justice and Mercy.

B.

1. Beware of occasions of sin, and wisely inure your self in subduing the least, that at length the greater may be foiled.

2. Believe all that God speaketh unto you out of his word, but not all that man telleth you: nor tell to any other all that you hear, but only the truth, and that neither all, nor always.

3. Before you take in hand any thing counsel with Gods word if it be lawful, and then perform it with Prayer, that it may be as successful as lawful.

C.

1. Carefully set your self in Gods presence all the day long, that setting him your right hand you may not fall.

2. Carry your self unto all as the weak may be won, the strong comforted, and the wicked ashamed.

3. Consider the dignity of your soul how beautiful it is to God and his Angels so long as you keep it unspotted; that so you may cleanse your heart from the first motions of sinful thoughts, as lust, anger, envy, pride, ambition.

with ambition, covetousness, fullness: and the
rather, because the least sin deserveth death.

D.

1. Daily morning and evening, at least
solemnly on your knees make confession and
requests with thanksgiving: first preparing
your heart to seek the Lord: in the mor-
ning think that that day may be your last
day, and when you go to bed, you know
not whether you shall rise unless it be to
judgment. It is safest therefore to use
prayer as a key to open the morning, and
as a bar or lock to shut in the evening.

2. Delight to do all the good you can to
Gods Children; and to receive all the good
you can from them.

3. Distrust not Gods providence in any
matter, although you see the means want-
ing, neither when you have them, let them
be relied on more than God himself; but let
him be prayed unto for the prosperous use
of them.

E.

1. Exercise your mind in mediating of-
fices on the works of God, as his creating
and governing of the world, his prosper-
ing and punishing the wicked, his blessing
and correcting his Children, his preparing

Of unspeakable Joy for the one, and unutterable torment for the other ; but especially on the Sabbath, add to these meditations the holy exercises of prayer, Preaching, Sacraments, Holy Conference, and such like.

2. Esteem of every one better than yourself, and the more you excel another, be so much the more humbled.

3. Examine your thoughts well whither they tend, before you fulfil your own desires ; if you find them unprofitable, curious, vain, or such as you cannot yield a sufficient reason to God or Man for, kill them in the shell, let them not live or breathe longer in you.

F.

1. Fear God and keep his Commandments : for this is the whole duty of man.

2. Fly and avoid places and persons ; infectious, wanton, idle, unthrifty and bad company, which are to the soul as poysoned and infected air to the body.

3. Follow with faithfulness and diligence your own business, in the lawful and particular calling wherein God hath placed you ; only be careful in your earthly business to carry an heavenly mind.

G

1. Grow up daily in the practice of every commandment, and in the faith of every promise of God; seeing God would have those planted in his house thrive, well liking and more fruitful in their age: he that is not best at last, may fear whether ever he were good.

2. Give no offence justly unto any man, whether within or without: for woe to them by whom offences come.

3. Grieve for nothing in the world so much as for your own sins, and in them for nothing so much as for offending so loving a God; and that not only in committing of evil, but also in omitting of good.

H

1. Humble your self for your sins, that the Lord may raise you up; for he thatudgeth himself aright, shall never be judged of the Lord.

2. Honour all men in their Places, but no man so much for his greatness as for his goodness: and thus shall you imitate the Lord himself, who accepteth not persons, but in every Nation accepteth him that feareth him.

3. Have special care to avoid the sin which you have found your self most inclined unto, and which have in times past most prevailed: for sin is loath to be said nay, and Satan seeketh re-entry.

I.

1. Justifie Gods wisdom in all his proceedings concerning your self and others his Power in sustaining, his Providence in maintaining, his Justice in punishing, his Love in correcting, his Bounty in promising, his Faithfulness in performing, his Grace in giving, his Mercy in taking away: and in every thing say from the heart, Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

2. In every company receive some good, and do some also to your power leave no ill savour behind you, neither be hurt by speech, silence, countenance, or example: in your praises be discreet, in saluting courteous, in admonishing brotherly: and wise in moving and entertaining speech or conference.

3. It is fearful to sin, but much more to lye in it: and therefore register all your sins daily, bewail them at fit times, pray for pardon of them, and strength against them, condemn none as counting it little, because

God

God's law hath condemned it; and Christ hath died for it, or else you must eternally.

K.

1. Know God in Christ, which is life everlasting, kiss the Son of God lest he be angry, and know your self to be a believer, and that Christ is in you, and you in him.

2. Keep as your vows with God, so your lawful promises with men: for faith and truth must kiss each other in Christian conversation.

3. Keep out wandring and worldly thoughts as much as possible may be, narrowly watching your heart; for, such as you suffer that to be, such will be your words, deeds, and whole conversation.

L.

1. Love all things for Gods sake, and God only for his own; and look you make him your friend, whosoever be your enemy for it: this you shall do, if as an obedient child, you live in the eye of your heavenly father.

2. Look upon the lives and behaviours of the wicked, to avoid them; of the godly, to imitate them; upon the Life and Death of them both, as also your own not far off, to make you loathe this world, and long after the life to come.

3. Let your meat, apparel, recreation be lawful, needful, and moderate.

M.

1. Make not mention of God, or any word or work of his, but with fear and reverence: nor of any man but with love and carefulness, using his name as you would have him to use yours.

2. Mark other mens profiting in religion, to provoke your self, their slips to make your self more wary, their risings to be thankful to God for them.

3. Meditate often upon the four last things. 1. Death. 2. Judgment. 3. Heaven. 4. Hell.

N.

1. Never make shew of more holiness outwardly, than inwardly you have in your heart which God seeth, in which he desireth truth: nor please your self with your unprofitableness, unfitness, or unwillingness to good.

2. No man is owner, but steward of that he hath, you must therefore impart of the blessings you have, to those that stand in need, wisely, heartily, and in due season.

3. Note your own special corruption whether they grow stronger or weaker, and

how

how your self can resist them : and if any assault you more strongly, pray, and make the matter known to God : The best way for a woman solicited to folly, to be rid of the Tempter, is to tell her Husband.

O.

1. Often speak to the praise of God, never of your self. For other things, because many words want not iniquity, speak as few as you can, or rather none than unprofitable.

2. Open not your mouth to speak of other mens infirmities, especially behind them : nor before them without grief and sorrow.

3. Of every idle word account must be given, and much more of every wicked word, and therefore let your speech be gracious, poudred with salt, and tending to edification.

P.

1. Praise the Lord for every new benefit bestowed, and then by it promote his glory, the Churches good, and your own salvation : esteeming of graces given as spurs to godliness, and pledges of eternal life.

2. Prevent anger before it kindle ; it is wisdom to quench the least sparkle of fire

G 5

before

before it begin to flame. Consider, 1. The original of anger, being pride or self-love. 2. The cursed fruits, by giving place to the Devil. 3. God's patience. 4. God's image in your brother. 5. Your own weakness in the same kind. 6. The wrong is not remedied by revenge, but enlarged; nor the wrong-doer amended, but imitated.

3. Prepare your self for death, and pull out his sting by, 1. Bewailing sins past. 2. Turning to God in time to come. 3. Purposing a new life. None can die ill, that hath had a care to live well. Perswade your self, if you live well, you shall die well; but if you die well, doubt not but you shall do better.

Q.

1. Quiet your heart, and be still under the correcting hand of God, because 1. He doth it. 2. For your best. 3. He will moderate it. 4. Supply strength. 5. Seasonably deliver out of it.

2. Question not whether others should do you good, or you them first: it is praiseworthy to be first in well-doing: and if you do good to your enemies, your reward is with God.

3. Quench not the Spirit; nor suffer any good motion arising in your heart to pass away,

away, but feed it by reading, meditation, prayer, and practice.

R.

1. Read daily something of God's Book for the increase of knowledge and conscience; and add hereto meditation and prayer: for these three, saith *Luther*, make a Divine: all time thus spent is well redeemed. As for lascivious and idle Books, shun them as rocks.

2. Rejoyce in the good you know by another: praise God for it, pray for the increase of it. But if you know any evil by any, mourn for it, and if you can, by brotherly admonition amend it.

3. Refrain your ears, eyes, mouth, and hands, from hearing, seeing, speaking or performing any wicked and vain thing; knowing that death often entereth in at the windows.

S.

1. Stick to God, as well in adversity as prosperity; the one being as necessary as the other. If you want necessities, humble your self for them: if you have them, be humble with them; and use them well, lest you forfeit them.

2. Seek Reconciliation with your Neighbour,

bour, freely forgiving those that have offended you, and earnestly desiring to be forgiven of all that have been offended by you.

3. Study to approve both your heart to God, and your Life to God's Children in your particular calling, and especially to such, as, to whom God hath joyned you: as, if a Servant in obeying, if a Master in ruling, if an Husband in loving, if a Wife in reverence; for a good Conscience, a good Name, and good Manners must go together.

T.

1. Take heed of performing holy Duties for Fashions sake, or without feeling and profit: for this is hypocrisie or prophaneness.

2. Thankfully requite, at least with,
1. Acknowledgment, 2. Hearty affection.
3. Prayer, the good you get by any man: for there is no member in the body but standeth in need of other mens gifts.

3. Think it the greatest work in the world to die well: which to do, you must inure your self to die before hand. 1. By dying to your sins. 2. Leaving the world in affection, before it actually leave you. 3. In your last leaving of it, do it willingly, yea Joyfully, whensoever, wheresoever, or howsoever God shall call you.

1. Vow

V.

1. Vow to God and keep it : especially strive in performing the solemn vow of your Baptism, and the Covenant which you renew in the Lord's Supper.

2. Variance and Discord with men will not stand with your peace with God. If you love God, you will love Men also, for God's image ; or else for his Commandments sake.

3. Use the World as not using it, and your prosperity and liberty to be bettered by them. That is not gained, which is gotten with the loss of your Soul, and then is the Soul exchanged with an handful of the world, when it is not gotten and held.

1. In Christ restoring it. 2. With Christ the chief gain. 3. For Christ the Lord of it.

W.

1. Wait upon the Lord, and he will direct your way, become his Servant, for this is the way to attain your truest Liberty.

2. Weep with them that weep, and fellow-feel the afflictions of the Brethren that are in the world ; Christ in Heaven accounteth the sufferings of his Saints his own, and we his Members upon Earth must do the same ;

same; Religion and Mercy are well matched by God, and must not by Man be divorced; as for the miseries and sins of the age wherein you live, mourn also for them, and pray to God for remedy.

3. Wish not a long life so much as a good Life: he hath lived long who hath lived well. A short Life in Grace setteth into the everlasting Life of Glory.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy Statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy Law: yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed thy commandments.

Let my heart be found in thy Statutes; that I be not ashamed.

Through thy Precepts I get understanding.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet: and a light unto my Path.

A Morning Prayer for Private Families.

MO S T gracious God, and loving Father, in all humility of Soul, and unfeigned acknowledgment of our bounden Duty, we present our selves here before thy Throne of Majesty and Glory, desiring in some measure to shew our thankfulness, for multitudes of thy Mercies heaped upon us thy most unworthy Servants. By thee at the first we were fearfully and wonderfully made, thou coverd'st us in our Mother's Wombs, thou gavest us the shape of Men and Women, when it was free for thee to have equalled us unto thy basest Creatures: since it hath pleased thee to preserve us, to watch over us, and to guard us by thy Providence, to open thy hand, and to replenish us with good things, to give us Food and Rayment, Health, Liberty and Peace. O Lord, thy Compassions fail not, but they are renewed every Morning: even in this Night past, we have received an apparent evidence of thy Love. For whereas, for the Sins committed the day before, thou mightest even in the dead of sleep have taken our Souls from us, and so suddenly

suddenly have brought us to an account, it hath been thy Pleasure yet to spare us, and not only so, but to refresh us with quiet rest, and to bring us in Safety to the beginning of this day. Grant (O Lord) we pray thee, that the ordinary use of these thy Kindnesses may not make us the less to esteem them: but so affect our hearts with the apprehension of them, that we may learn to admire thy Mercy, who dealest so graciously with such unthankful Persons as we have always been, and may even bind our selves to strive to shew all Obedience and Duty to thee, who dost so enlarge thy Goodness unto us.

But chiefly, O Lord, raise up (we beseech thee) our hearts and our affections from these outward Favours (the least of which notwithstanding is greater than the best of our deservings) and draw us to the serious consideration of those Blessings, which do more directly concern a better Life.

Make us thankfully mindful of the Grace of Election, by which thou freely choosest us in Christ to be Vessels of Mercy, before we were: of thy sending thy Son out of thine own Bosom, being in thine own Form, to take on him the Form of a Servant, and to become obedient unto the
Death,

Death, even the Death of the Cross for our sakes : for thy calling us out of the Kingdom of Darkness by the power of the Gospel preached : of thy shining into our Hearts, by the enlightning of thy Spirit : of quickning us, when we were Dead in trespasses and sins : of thy begetting us again unto a lively hope : of the first Fruits of the Spirit, and of that earnest of our Inheritance which thou hast given us of the daily free use and liberty of thy Word, whereby that great Mystery of Godliness, yea, even thy whole Counsel is clearly revealed unto us.

O Lord, teach us to consider what miserable Creatures we were in our selves, and what a fearful case we had yet been in, if thou hadst left us to our Selves ; that so the view of these unspeakable and undeserved Favours, may even ravish our Spirits, and possess our Hearts, that we may constantly resolve, henceforth to give up our selves as a living Sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto thee, and to devote all our Powers both of Soul and Body, to the Glory and Honour of thy Name.

And (Lord) enable us heretunto we pray thee : for we are not sufficient of our Selves to think any thing, as of our Selves ; we are naturally reprobate to every good Work. Open therefore the eyes of our Mind, that we

we may see what is good, and what thou requirest of us: Teach us to make thy Word our Delight and Counsellor, that by it we may be informed in thy paths: Put thy Spirit within us, and cause us to walk in thy Statutes: let our ears continually hear a word behind us, saying, *This is the way*. Give us Hearts of flesh, yielding and pliable Affections: subdue the Crookedness of our Nature, and bring it under the obedience of Christ.

And when thou hast entred us into a good Course, uphold us therein, by thy All-sufficient Grace, stablish us in every Word and good Work, fill us with the Fruits of Righteousness, let us not be idle, nor unfruitful in our Profession: But grant that we may be even rich in good Works, and so may adorn the Doctrine of thee our Saviour in all things, making the Adversaries of thy truth ashamed, when they shall have nothing concerning us to speak evil of. And shield us (O Lord) we earnestly intreat thee, against the malice and rage, and fury of the Devil: give us Wisdom to discern his Policies, and Courage to resist even his most fiery Assaults: Make us wise against the beguiling Inticements of this sinful World: let us not be carried away with the Streams of these corrupt times: harden our

Faces against the reproaches and enmities of evil Men : suffer us not to be wearied, nor to faint in our Minds for any Tribulations : sanctifie unto us every Affliction, that it may be a means to purge out our Corruptions. Draw our Minds from the love of this present World : teach us to use it as if we used it not, grant that we may ever remember, that we have here no continuing City, that so we may seek for that Kingdom that cannot be shaken, but is eternal in the Heavens. Cause us to depend upon thy Providence, and to cast our Care and Burden upon thee, assuring our Selves, that thou who hast given us Christ, canst not but with him give us all things else.

And (Lord) if at any time we fall into Sin, as who are we, that we should presume? put under thine hand, we beseech thee, Deliver us out of the Mire, that we sink not, let not sin swallow us up, let it not grow strong upon us, lest we perish.

Enable us unto Diligence, and Faithfulness in our several Callings, teach us to lift up our Hearts to thee, for a Blessing upon our Endeavours, and to remember that we are always in thy Presence, that so we may study to walk with thee, and to approve
our

our very thoughts unto thee. Give us a sober use of thy Creatures: Make us ready to reach out our hands unto the wants of others, beget in us a godly Jealousie over our selves, that we may walk circumspectly taking heed to our selves in our Eatings, in our Apparel, in our Company, in our Recreations, often considering our Ways, and labouring quickly after our Errors, to turn our Feet into thy Testimonies.

Heap thy Blessings upon our gracious Queen, make her a further instrument of much good unto thy chosen People, shew Mercy to the Royal Progeny, be gracious to the Council, to the Court, the Nobles, the Gentry of the Realm: Grant that they may all aim at the honouring of thee, by whom they have received Honour amongst Men: Be with the Magistracy and Ministry of the Realm, make thy Word to grow by the Labours of those, whom thou hast appointed to the Service of thy Church: Contain the Subjects in their due obedience to Authority, bring to naught all tumultuous and rebellious Practices, comfort all thine afflicted Servants, refresh them with a sweet feeling of thy Favour.

Give to us compassionate Hearts, and a fellow feeling of others Miseries, prepare us unto the day of Tryal: and keep us by thy

thy mighty Power, through Faith, unto
salvation. Grant us these good things, for
Christ's sake, in whose Name we commend
our selves, and our suits unto thee, saying
as he himself hath taught us.

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for private Families.

O Lord our God, most merciful and gra-
cious in Jesus Christ, among other thy
shew mercies, with which thou dost even follow
thy most unthankful Servants, we ac-
knowledge this to be none of the least, that
they have this comfortable Freedom of com-
e, bying into thy Presence, there to pour out our
onghts before thee, and to lay open our Ne-
cessities unto thee. We pray thee teach us
grow to value this Privilege according to the
u have worth thereof: that we may come to-
gether to the performance of this Duty with
ience and Hearts and cheerful Spirits, rejoycing
multitude in it, that we have opportunity given us, to
ort all our strength in some part of that great Duty, which
with many respects we owe to thy Divine Ma-
jesty.

And now (Lord) being come before thee,
we cannot but confess the Vileness of our
state: we were conceived in sin, and in
sin

sin [have we continued all our Days, we have even drunk Iniquity like water, we have drawn it after us, and tied it unto us as with Cart-ropes, wickedness hath been sweet in our mouth; we have savoured it and would not forsake it, we have even made a mock of sin, and it hath been a Pastime to us to do wickedly.

Thou hast often called us, but we have still refused, thou hast again and again stretched out thine hand, but we have not regarded, thou hast sought to reclaim us but we have hardned our Necks as it were with Stiffness and we have hated to be reformed. Thou hast waited to have Mercy upon us, thy Spirit hath striven with us, thy very Bowels have been troubled for us, and how graciously hast thou called upon us by thy Word? Saying, *Return, ye Sons of Adam: why will ye die? Come unto me, and ye shall find rest for your Souls.* Yet, we notwithstanding have despised thy Patience, we have abused thy Goodness, we have turned thy Grace into Wantonness, and have given thee cause to heap upon us all those fearful Plagues and Punishments, which in the extremity of thy Law belong to the wicked.

When we look into our Hearts, we see nothing but a confused heap of gross Corruptions

ptions, Vanity, Ignorance, Watchfulness,
 towardness, Unteachableness, Dullness
 unwillingness, and Unaptness unto Good,
 oneness and Readiness to any manner of
 wil, Secure, Irreligious, Prophane, Unclean,
 vious, Covetous, and greedy Thoughts,
 erverse and disordered Affections, all these
 s it were) marching together to rebel a-
 gainst thee; and leading us captive unto

O Lord, if thou shouldest straightly
 mark our Iniquities, O Lord, how shall
 we stand, where shall we appear? What
 shall become of us? what Answer shall
 we be able to make thee to one of a thou-
 sand?

And (yet most gracious God) which is
 most of all, Custom in Evil hath bred such
 Hardness in us, and hath brought such a
 crust upon our Consciences, that we can-
 not be perswaded that thy wrath is so terri-
 ble, our Sins so grievous, or our Estate so
 awful, as indeed it is. Hence it commeth,
 that we do not stand in such awe of thy
 Majesty as we should do, we do not so
 tremble at thy Justice, nor esteem thy Pro-
 mises and Miseries, as we ought to do: we
 beseech thee therefore to take the stony
 hearts out of our Bodies; and to put new
 spirits into our Bowels, that we may with
 feeling

feeling, and with a lively and sensible Apprehension, confess our selves to be as we are, poor and wretched, and miserable and blind, and naked, such as in whom there is no Goodness, such as to whom there is nothing due but shame and confusion of Face for ever.

And (O Lord) make us ready for Affliction: teach us to remember, that we must through many Tribulations enter into thy blessed Kingdom: In our Health, make us mindful of Sicknes, of Death, and of our last account, that these things may not come upon us as a Snare, but that we may be prepared always in some good measure, to submit our selves unto thy most wise and holy Appointments.

And now O Lord our God, We know that thou dost neither slumber nor sleep: keep us from the Malice of Satan, from Security and Carelesness, from Dulness and Drowsiness of Spirit; that if it shall be thy Pleasure to let us live until the Morning, we may become so much the fitter to serve thee in our several Callings, so as may be meet for the Glory of thy great Name, through Jesus Christ: in whose Name we commend our selves and our unworthy Prayers unto thee, saying as he hath directed us in the Gospel. *Our Father, &c.* 15 AU 64

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